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THE

METAMORPHOSES OF APULEIUS;

A

ROMANCE OF THE SECOND CENTURY.

THE

METAMORPHOSES OF APULEIUS;

A

ROMANCE OF THE SECOND CENTURY.

TRANSLATED FROM THE LATIN,

By SIR GEORGE HEAD,

AUTHOR OF "A TOUR OF MANY DAYS IN ROME;" "HISTORICAL MEMOIRS OF CARDINAL PACCA," TRANSLATED FROM THE ITALIAN, ETC.

LONDON:

LONGMAN, BROWN, GREEN, AND LONGMANS.

1851.

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TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

THE Metamorphoses of Apuleius is a work singular of its kind,—a genuine ancient romance, written at the beginning of the second century, replete with graphic and characteristic descriptions, scenes and incidents, exhibiting, in infinite variety, the habits, manners, and customs prevailing among the people in the provinces subject to the Roman empire. Under the form of a personal narrative, interspersed with episodes, are collected interesting, instructive, and amusing sketches relating to popular superstitions, religious ceremonies, social entertainments, proceedings of courts of law, dramatic spectacles of the amphitheatres, hordes of robbers, &c., &c., &c. Nevertheless, although the detail of marvellous and fabulous adventures, mingled with the common occurrences of every-day life at such an early period, must naturally be a species of light reading, calculated above all things to engage the attention of the general public, there is perhaps no work of the ancient writers with which they are so little acquainted.

In order to account for a fact which at first sight

would seem incompatible with the nature of a performance of extraordinary merit, it must be taken into consideration, that the work in question of Apuleius appears before the world in the singular predicament of a production written in Latin by a Greek and a foreigner. For Apuleius, the land of his birth having become a Roman colony, made himself master of the language of the mother country without the aid of a preceptor, and composed in Latin the Metamorphoses, and all other of his works that have descended to posterity. Therefore although everywhere throughout his writings there is most clear and abundant testimony of the varied knowledge he possessed, as well as of a fertile imagination, acute understanding, and peculiar facility of description, his language is deficient in elegant purity of Latinity to such a degree, that despite of the abundance of quaint, humorous fancies, that in easy, familiar, and frequently eloquent diction he has embodied in an entertaining, well-concerted narrative, he can by no means be considered to deserve a place among genuine classic writers.

The imperfection of the Latinity of the Metamorphoses were a circumstance alone sufficient to account, to a great extent, for its limited circulation among classical students, and thence for its not acquiring a due meed of general celebrity; though there have been hitherto other more serious obstacles in its way that require to be mentioned. Although Apuleius was a Platonic philosopher, and notwithstanding that the Metamor-

phoses is written throughout in a highly moral tone, evidently with a moral object in view; moreover, that the pagan hero of his tale, after being conducted through various vicissitudes, terminates his career in the ranks of the priesthood of the goddess Isis, and that the descriptions of religious forms and ceremonies exclusively compose the whole substance of the eleventh and last book; the pages nevertheless reflecting the spirit of a period seventeen hundred years ago, are occasionally deformed by passages such as, in the present state of civilization in the nineteenth century, are not to be tolerated. Moreover, in addition to the above objectionable qualities to free currency, Apuleius passes with extraordinary abruptness from subject to subject, and expresses himself not unfrequently with such conciseness and brevity, that here and there more time and attention are requisite thoroughly to comprehend his meaning, than any reader under ordinary circumstances could be expected to bestow. Indeed, it may be cited as an instance of the prevailing obscurity, that in Valpy's London edition of the original, the proportion of explanatory notes in comparison to the text of the Metamorphoses are more than double. Finally, in all the Latin editions, the whole text, including narrative, episodes, &c., is confusedly jumbled together, without blank space between paragraphs, inverted commas to distinguish dialogue, or any auxiliary mark whatever—save the full stops that divide the sentences—to assist the eye of the reader, or

enable him to anticipate the frequent changes from one subject to another of a totally different nature, which, occurring suddenly and unexpectedly, are calculated to break the continuity, and thereby perplex the main scheme of the story.

In preparing the present translation for the public, I have not been actuated by the presumptuous expectation to enlighten the classical reader, but have merely been influenced by the desire of doing the utmost in my power to remove the dead weight that for a long period has rested upon an agreeable and excellent work of an ancient writer. I have therefore, in the first place, divested it of every syllable calculated to give offence to the most scrupulous reader; and in the next, have endeavoured to place the composition in the perspicuous form necessary to its perfect elucidation. Rendering into English, with strict fidelity, every thought and image emanating from the mind of the author, and giving the value and true signification of his words—not less anxious, at the same time, to preserve and develope the full scope and character of his performance—I have called it in my title-page, in addition to its original designation, "A ROMANCE OF THE SECOND CENTURY,"—a title which, I trust, whether the book be resorted to merely as a version of the Latin original, or with reference to the light, amusing qualities of a romance, will not be found calculated either way to disappoint the reader. Accordingly, in order to assimilate it as much as possible to the above-

mentioned description, I have arranged the paragraphs, marked the dialogue in the usual way, and, especially, with regard to the episodes have given a distinct number and a name to each, and separated all by blank space at the beginning and at the end, in such a manner that, being thoroughly detached from the body of the text, the reader may have opportunity of perusing narrative or episodes distinct from one another as he may feel inclined.

The period and the circumstances under which Apuleius composed his Metamorphoses are not known with precision, neither has it been ascertained when he himself flourished, farther than that he is supposed to have been about contemporary with Lucian, in the beginning of the second century. It is, at all events, generally admitted, that he was born of a good family at Madaura,* received the first rudiments of education at Carthage, thence proceeded to Athens to complete his studies, and afterwards set out on his travels through Italy, Greece, and Asia.

There is, however, one romantic event recorded to have happened to him, that possibly may have influenced his mind with reference to the composition of the Metamorphoses. While on his way to Alexandria, he happened to fall sick at the town of Oea,† where his protracted visit in the house of a young man, his host, led to a matrimonial alliance with the young

* A town in Numidia, S.W. of Carthage.

† Now Tripoli.

man's mother, a lady of large independent fortune, named Pudentilla, who had at that time been fourteen years a widow. Soon after the marriage was solemnized, the family of the lady, who as well as she herself appear to have been captivated at first with Apuleius's wit and learning, and to have anxiously promoted the alliance, joined all together in a conspiracy to dissolve the connexion, in order to prevent the alienation of Pudentilla's property. Accordingly they resolved to accuse Apuleius of the crime of witchcraft, on the ground that he had won the lady's heart by means of spells and incantations. On which ridiculous charge, sustained on proofs the most absurd and frivolous, he was arraigned with all the due formalities of the law, and the cause actually tried at Sabrata,* then a Roman colony, before Claudius Maximus, the proconsul. On that occasion Apuleius pronounced in his defence the celebrated "APOLOGY," one of the principal of his works now extant, and defeated his antagonists triumphantly.

Although in that defence Apuleius never ventured to deny the existence of the deadly science of which he was accused, his forbearance is probably rather to be attributed to the desire of paying respect to the superstitious feelings of the age in which he lived, than to his own actual belief in the power of sorcery. At all events, it is replete with satirical contempt of the

* A maritime town in Africa, 70 miles from Tripoli.

charge of his adversaries, and in its tone is precisely such as might be expected from him at a period when witchcraft had been denounced by the enlightened men of the age more than a hundred years before. Horace, for instance, had given the world a graphic picture of his sentiments on the subject of witchcraft in that witty apostrophe,* where, turning into ridicule the mysteries of Canidia and Sagana, he immortalizes their doings on a moonlight night on the Esquiline, and describes them seized with a sudden ridiculous panic, taking flight, and running away in dismay, helter-skelter, leaving false hair, teeth, and all the redoubtable implements of their art behind them. After all, Canidia, whom in his fifth epode he attacks so virulently in a mock heroic strain, was doubtless no more of a witch than some object of a former attachment who slighted him in her youth, and therefore he was ever after twitting her under various titles, for instance, under the name of Lydia,† or of Lyce,‡ and, last of all, in allusion to her age and grey hair, CANIDIA.

Now, whether or not the mind of Apuleius may have been influenced by the opinions of his learned predecessors, even if it were only permitted to draw an inference from the sarcastic tone of the defence above alluded to, there are sufficient grounds of probability to come to the conclusion that, smarting under the vexatious and ludicrous charge of witchcraft made

* Satire 8. † Lib. i. Od. 25.

‡ Lib. iv. Od. 13.

against him, he had recourse to the composition of the Metamorphoses—which is generally believed to be a satire on the superstition and vices of the age—as a vehicle for his sarcastic humour. Upon which supposition, therefore, it may be taken for granted that he availed himself, as the ground-work of his composition, of a pleasant fable of previous celebrity, which—relating to the miraculous adventures of a certain Lucius, who, by the magic art of the Thessalian witches, was transformed into an ass, and suffered a numerous train of vicissitudes till finally he was restored to his proper shape—particularly suited his purpose.

This tale, however, commonly recognized under the title of the GOLDEN ASS, has been jointly attributed to Apuleius and to Lucian, which latter version, written in Greek, is unquestionably similar, and identical in the main features of the story; although—with the exception of the name of the hero Lucius, which is the same in both—the names of people and of places are different. Indeed, it is universally admitted that either both Apuleius and Lucian derived it from a common source, or that one took it from the other. By some, in a tone of slight confidence and on exceedingly slender authority, it is ascribed to one Lucius, of Patræ.* It matters little, however, whether Apuleius borrowed the story from Lucian or from Lucius of Patræ, though it is probable he took it from Lucian.

* A town at the N.W. of Peloponnesus.

But, on the other hand, it is almost incredible to imagine that Lucian took it from Apuleius, since he would hardly have condescended, even had he availed himself of the performance of a contemporary Latin author, to send before the world a Greek version so infinitely its inferior. Indeed, the Metamorphoses, as well in excellence of composition as in quantity, bears an overwhelming proportion to the version of Lucian, and contains, of matter which confessedly and undisputedly belongs to Apuleius and to nobody else, the whole of the eleventh book and all the episodes, together with very numerous increments and embellishments in the body of the narrative.

Belonging to the latter portion—the literary property of Apuleius exclusively, to which no direct claim on the part of any other author has ever been made—the tale of Cupid and Psyche is to be especially noticed; which celebrated fable, written evidently with the intention to represent allegorically the career of the human soul, ψυχη, through scenes of mortal tribulation to a state of celestial beatitude after death—since Apuleius entertained a deadly enmity to the Christians and their ceremonies,* and there is, moreover, no prevailing indication on the part of the writer of any direct definite ideas of a Christian throughout the story—must therefore be alone attributed to the beautiful images suggested involuntarily to his poetical

* See note, page 306.

mind by those mysterious events which had been promulgated during the preceding century: which splendid images he engrafted on a structure of heathen mythology, and thereby producing the fable in question, gave it a prominent place in the Metamorphoses. With the exception of Cupid and Psyche, which forms the fifth episode in the volume, all the remaining nine episodes, containing tales relating to crime, superstition, the proceedings of criminal courts of justice, &c., being incidents of a character calculated to promote the object stated in the beginning, such as he might either have witnessed himself or heard of during his travels, it may be readily conceived that he introduced them accordingly, in order to compose the series of MILESIAN TALES, which he states in his extremely short preface are strung together for the entertainment of the reader. Little, however, is to be gathered of the object and design of the author's work in the few introductory lines above alluded to, which, in the edition of Valpy, are not even dignified with the title of a preface, but incorporated with the body of the text at the opening of the book. With regard to the term "Milesian,"*

* From Miletus, a town of Asia Minor, capital of Ionia, whose inhabitants were celebrated for a description of pleasant fictions that, *par excellence*, obtained among the ancients the epithet above cited. Miletus was also remarkable for the oracle of Apollo situated there; and may be considered in the high road to that eastern source whence the Arabian Nights and other agreeable imaginative productions of a like nature have conti-

the precise sense in which it was intended to be applied by Apuleius—whether to the numerous incidents and anecdotes comprised in the narrative of the Golden Ass or to his episodes—must remain a matter of conjecture; though it is most probable that he merely meant to use it in a general sense, as applicable to the style and character of the various detached pieces collected together in his composition.

Unquestionably, from the beginning to the end of the adventures of his hero Lucius, it was himself whom he intended to personate. Indeed, that such was his object, appears very clearly by a passage in the eleventh book, where he designates Lucius as a native of the city of Madaura,* his own birthplace. And again, in the description of the mock trial at Hypata, where Lucius was tried for his life for murder, of which description of the proceedings of the court, and the ludicrous circumstances connected with the charge, that appear to be directly pointed at the real charge of witchcraft on which he himself was actually tried at Sabrata, not a word is to be found in Lucian, but every syllable is the pure invention of Apuleius exclusively. In addition to the above instances, there are various others throughout the work that might be cited in support of the supposition that Apuleius and Lucius are to be considered as one and the same person;

nually emanated—even, as we learn by the term in question, before the time of Apuleius.

* See page 407.

but having stated in general elucidation of the subject all that occurs to my mind at present, I must beg leave here to conclude my preface by humbly submitting to the favourable attention of the reader, without farther delay, an English version of the Metamorphoses, whence the means, I trust, will be afforded him of determining the proposed question on his own judgment.

G. H.

January 20th, 1851.

PREFACE.

COURTEOUS READER—If thou canst tolerate the writing of a reed plucked from the banks of the Nile on sheets of Egyptian papyrus, I will string together a collection of Milesian fables, and tickle thy benevolent ears with a merry whispering. I will astonish thee with the adventures of men transformed into various shapes, and again restored to their original form. But before I begin, I will first briefly say who I am.

Mount Hymettus of Attica, the Isthmus of Corinth, and the Spartan Tenedos, fertile lands immortalised in the works of our most celebrated authors, are my ancient domicile, where in early youth I learnt pure Attic Greek. Afterwards coming to Rome, a stranger to the native language of the Quirites, I applied myself to the study without the assistance of a preceptor, and acquired it with painful labour.

Now, therefore, at the commencement (albeit the change of language bear some relation to my subject—the MAGIC ART), let me ask thy pardon, lest aught exotic in the discourse of one unpractised in a foreign tongue offend thee. Listen then to a pleasant Greek story that will please thee.

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THE

METAMORPHOSES OF APULEIUS:

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BOOK I.

Departure of Lucius from Corinth—Overtakes two Travellers—Their Conversation.

First Episode.—*Tale of Aristomenes the Commercial Traveller.*

Arrives at Hypata — Delivers Letters of Introduction to Milo—Is received into Milo's House — Adventure in the Fish-Market — An arbitrary Magistrate.

My mother was descended from the celebrated Plutarch and his nephew, the philosopher Sextus, persons whose names are honourable to their posterity; and my family derives its origin from Thessaly, whither, having an affair of business to transact, I one day set forth mounted on a milk-white native horse of that country. I had ridden over lofty mountains, slippery valleys, dew-sprinkled plains, and rough clodded ground in abundance, till at last, the horse becoming weary, and myself tired of sitting in the saddle, I jumped upon my feet on a piece of green turf before me in order to shake

off my fatigue. Taking the bit out of the horse's mouth, I carefully wiped the sweat off his forehead, rubbed his ears, and was leading him slowly forward at a gentle pace, step by step, in order to give opportunity for relief and refreshment, as stretching forward his head and neck he cropped a hasty breakfast from the greensward on each side as he went along, when suddenly I found myself the third of two other travellers who by chance were on the road before me. As they were talking, I listened to hear the subject of their conversation, when one, addressing himself to the other, and bursting into a laugh—

"A truce to such absurd stories," said he; "prithee have done with thy monstrous lying."

"Nay," said I, who have ever had a keen thirst to learn everything new, "speak rather what thou hast to say; for though not inquisitive nor desirous of universal knowledge, I delight, forsooth, to hear all I can. Besides, a pleasant entertaining story will help to relieve the steepness of the hill we are ascending."

"Why," said the first speaker, "the lie he has just told has about as much truth in it as to declare that the magicians now-a-days are able to make rapid rivers turn right about and run backwards, lash the sluggish waves of the sea into violent motion, stop the breath of the winds, darken the sun, cause foam to drop from the moon, pluck the stars from their spheres, and turn day into night."

"Then," replied I, addressing myself in a tone of

somewhat more confidence than before to him who spoke first, "let it not tire nor trouble thee to tell us the remainder of thy story;" and turning to the other, "Heavy are thy ears," I continued, "and stubborn thy heart thus to reject what peradventure may turn out to be true. Little surely dost thou know, by Hercules! the depraved opinions that men form relating to all the new things they see and hear, and how they reject as untrue facts that, on a nearer survey, are self-evident and easily comprehended. Why, 'twas only last evening, when endeavouring to eat faster than my companions, and swallow a piece of soft cheese larger than ordinary, the glutinous morsel sticking in my throat, and closing up the breath in my windpipe, had nearly choked me. Nevertheless, not long ago, these two very eyes of mine saw at Athens, in front of the Pœcile portico, a mountebank insert in his gullet the terrible, very sharp blade of a sword; and afterwards, in a similar manner, for a trifling remuneration, cram the iron point of a hunter's spear down his throat till he buried it deep in the viscera. Nay more; a slim, slender little lad got behind the fellow, and mounting upon the long handle, twisted, and twined, and played antics as if he had never a nerve nor a bone in his body. All of us who were present were lost in admiration to see him; for he looked like the noble serpent of Esculapius clinging in slippery coils round its half-clipped knotted staff. But, I pray thee, thou the narrator of the wonderful story thy compa-

nion talks of, tell it us again from the beginning, and I will promise to believe thee so far that thou shalt be sure of thy reward beforehand, and have thy dinner gratis at the first inn we come to."

"As to thy offer," replied the other, "'tis well and good; therefore I accept the proposal, and will begin once more my story, solemnly taking the divinity of the sun that shines upon us to witness that it is absolutely true. The events that I shall relate have not only actually happened, but are commonly in the mouths of the people all over Thessaly, as thou wilt know beyond all doubt at the first city we come to."

With that, without more ado, the speaker commenced his tale as follows.

FIRST EPISODE.

TALE OF ARISTOMENES, THE COMMERCIAL TRAVELLER.

My name is Aristomenes. As to my business and my country, I am a native of the island of Ægina, whence I have been travelling hither and thither through Thessaly, Ætolia, and Bœotia to procure articles of traffic, namely, honey of Hypata, cheese, and other

similar comestibles. Having received information of a large quantity of new cheese of exquisite flavour to be had at Hypata, the principal city of Thessaly, at a very low price, I made the best of my way thither with the intention of buying it all. But, alas! as frequently happens to me, starting in the morning with the left unlucky foot foremost, the main object of my journey was frustrated; and I found, on my arrival, that the whole lot had been purchased only the day before by a great wholesale dealer of the name of Lupus. In order to refresh myself after my rapid journey and my disappointment, I made a visit to the baths at an early hour in the evening, where, all of a sudden, I perceived a former companion of my own, called Socrates, sitting on the ground, half covered with a tattered mantle, looking like a beggar of broken victuals and offal in the streets, and so disguised by the paleness of his countenance and the miserably emaciated state of his body, that I scarcely recognised him. Such a lamentable figure was he that, even when I approached near, I accosted him, although a particular acquaintance with whom I had been on intimate terms, with doubt and hesitation.

"Mercy on us, my good friend Socrates!" said I, "what a figure thou art! What means this misery? What scandalous disgrace hath befallen thee? Why, thy family, after seeking thee in vain by proclamation, have bewailed thee as dead; thy funeral obsequies have been performed; thy children have been provided

with tutors by a decree of the province; thy wife, by grief and continual lamentations, hath well nigh cried her eyes out; and her parents are tormenting her to marry another husband in order to restore her good looks and bring joy to the household; and now, forsooth, here thou art, appearing again among us like a spectral apparition, to our eternal discomfiture."

"Oh, Aristomenes!" answered he, "never hast thou experienced in thine own person the ups and downs, the slippery turns, the unaccountable caprices, and the vicissitudes of fortune," at the same time endeavouring from very shame to hide the blush that suffused his cheeks, the coarse, patched garment that he lifted to cover his face left half his body bare. Unable to endure the sorrowful spectacle, I stretched out my hand, and endeavoured to lift him up; but he buried his face in his rags and remained where he was, exclaiming—"Let me alone! let me remain where I am! Fortune, that hath brought me to this pitch of wretchedness, hath but a brief period left to enjoy her triumph."

I nevertheless persisted in entreating him to get up and follow me, and clothing, though I can hardly say covering, his body with one of my own two garments, I prevailed on him to accompany me to the baths, where he was washed, scrubbed, and anointed, while I myself stood by and superintended an operation that, under present circumstances, was by no means superfluous. So soon as he was properly cleansed and set to rights, I brought him to the inn, whither, tired as I

was myself, I had the greatest difficulty to support him; but when we arrived there I got him put to bed, gave him as much food as he could eat, and comforted him with a good cup of wine. Then I began to entertain him with the news of our country, till our conversation assumed by degrees a tendency to merriment, and becoming at first flippant and jocular, he at last actually grew talkative and noisy. By and by, all of a sudden, changing his tone, spitefully striking his forehead with his right hand, and heaving a bitter sigh from the bottom of his heart,

"Miserable man that I am!" he exclaimed, "the love of frequenting gladiatorial spectacles, since, as thou wilt remember, I departed on an affair of business to Macedonia, has brought me into this trouble. Thence, after ten months' absence, I was on my return homewards with a round sum of money, and had nearly arrived at the city of Larissa, where I intended to witness a spectacle then about to be exhibited, when I was attacked in a rugged, lonely valley by a numerous band of robbers and stripped of all I had. I escaped with my life with difficulty, and, reduced to a miserable state of penury, betook myself to a tavern kept by a certain old woman of the name of Meroe. This old woman, who was sufficiently well-looking for her age, when I had explained to her the cause of my long absence, had related the manner in which I had been robbed that very day, and expressed my earnest desire to reach my home, treated me, after she became acquainted with all

these circumstances, with more than ordinary kindness, gave me a liberal supper and lodging gratuitously, and I remained in her house till the morning."

Here Socrates, suddenly breaking off in his narrative, and looking round the room with an anxious countenance; "Hush!" said he, placing his forefinger on his lips, as if there were listeners to our conversation, "I dare tell thee no more lest, through the intemperate use of my tongue, that terrible woman smite me with some dire pestilence!"

"What terrible woman dost thou mean?" said I. "What more of that potent hostess of thine, that queen of tavern keepers?"

"She is a witch of power divine!" replied Socrates; "a witch able to drag down the firmament, to support the world on her shoulders, freeze fountains, crumble mountains, raise the dead, dethrone the Gods, extinguish the stars, and illuminate the very depths of Tartarus!"

"Marry! let down thy tragic curtain," said I; "fold up thy scenic hangings, and, in ordinary language, say what thou hast to say."

"Nay then," he replied, "will one or two or how many more of her performances suffice thee? for I can tell thee that the charms and incantations of the Æthiopians and Antipodes are, compared to hers, nought but dry leaves, as it were, of the magic art, and mere trifles. Listen, then, and hear the acts she hath perpetrated in broad daylight before many

witnesses. In the first place, by pronouncing a single word she changed one of her lovers of whom she was jealous into a wild beaver, and exposed him to the persecution of the hunters, by way of retaliation for his slight of her. Then again because she had a grudge against a neighbouring innkeeper, for nothing more, forsooth! than being of her own profession, she transformed him into a frog. Poor fellow! he is now grown old; and hoarsely croaking, as it were, in the way of business to his old customers, sometimes sits buried in the dregs of his own wine, and at other times swims on the surface. Then there was a lawyer of the Forum who conducted a cause against her, and she changed him into a ram; so the lawyer still pleads his causes with his head, and gives rebutters and surrebutters as he used to do. Finally, there was the wife of one of her lovers, a chatterbox, who spoke scandal of her; and happening to be then about to increase her family, she condemned her to remain ever since that time in the same condition. Accordingly 'tis now eight years, people say, she has been continually growing larger and larger as if going to be brought to bed of an elephant.

"At last she did so much mischief, and inflicted injury on so many persons, that public indignation became aroused, and the people, bent on wreaking cruel vengeance, determined to stone her to death the next morning. But, by virtue of her enchantments, she overturned the counsels of her enemies, and, like Medea, who first obtained the truce of a single day from Creon, and then

reduced his house together with his daughter and himself to ashes; so she,—as a few evenings ago when she was tipsy she told me herself,—set to work in a ditch with her deadly incantations, and wrought such a forcible spell, that the inhabitants for two whole days were closely confined to their houses. They neither could break the fastenings, nor unhinge the doors, nor make a breach in the walls; but there remained close shut up till by mutual consent they one and all swore by everything good and solemn, not only never to lay hands upon her themselves, but even to protect her if attacked by others. When thus propitiated, she liberated the whole city with the exception of the principal conspirator, whom one stormy night she transported with his whole family, house and all, walls, foundations, and the very ground the house stood upon, close shut up by magic as it was, to another city situated at the top of a very high mountain a hundred miles distant. The latter city was badly supplied with water, on account of its elevated position; and as, in consequence of the density of the population, there was no room for the mansion of the conspirator, she hastily put it down outside the walls, and there left it."

"Faith, my good Socrates," said I, "'tis a marvellous and fearful history thou hast related; like the point of a spear in the flesh, it has made a deep impression on my mind; truly am I smitten with serious fear and apprehension lest, through the supernatural power of this old woman, she may have over-

heard our conversation. By all means let us lie down to rest immediately and be quiet, and, so soon as our night's sleep hath sufficiently refreshed us, let us leave the house and get as far away as possible from the place before daylight."

I had scarcely pronounced these words, when I perceived that the good Socrates, partly overcome by fatigue and excitement, and partly in consequence of having drank more wine than he had been lately accustomed to, was already fast asleep and snoring. I therefore shut the chamber door, and having bolted it and carefully propped my bed against it to make it still more secure, I lay down upon the bed. After lying awake a little while in a state of trepidation, I began to close my eyes by degrees, but had scarcely lost my recollection when, a little before the third watch of the night, I heard all of a sudden a thundering crash—a noise greater than could possibly be produced by mortal robbers—and in an instant the door was burst open, thoroughly torn from the hinges, and thrown down in the room. At the same time the violence of the shock upset my small sorry bedstead, which, one crazy foot of rotten wood having given way, fell upon me topsy-turvy, and, as I was shaken out and rolled upon the floor, completely covered and concealed me. Notwithstanding the state of excessive fear I was in, I felt influenced by a singular natural sensation which, by the rule of contraries, in the same manner as tears are frequently produced on joyful occasions, so tickled

my fancy with the resemblance of Aristomenes to a tortoise, that I could hardly refrain from laughter. However, while I was thus completely protected by the bed, and lying at my length on the ground sideways, I peeped out from underneath to see what was the matter, and saw two elderly women, one carrying in her hand a lighted lamp and the other a sponge and a drawn sword, approach Socrates as he lay sound asleep. Then said she of the sword and sponge to the other: "Look, sister Panthia, there lies my Ganymede, my dear Endymion, who hath laughed me to scorn, and, on account of my age, hath despised my love; nay, not only hath he scandalously defamed me, but, forsooth, purposes to run away in the morning, and leave me, like another deserted Calypso, to bewail the loss of my crafty Ulysses in eternal solitude. And there!"—added she, extending her right hand and pointing me out to Panthia,—"there! see his worthy counsellor Aristomenes, the proposer of the manœuvre, frightened to death under the bed, and looking at all we are doing. No doubt he thinks to tell all he knows with impunity; but, sooner or later, I'll be a match for him, and not only shall he pay for peeping, but rue his last night's loquacity into the bargain." At these words, wretch that I was, a cold perspiration immediately overspread my body, my heart palpitated, and my very bowels trembled in such a manner that the bed that lay upon me shook.

Meanwhile, replied the amiable Panthia, "Well,

sister, what shall be done with him? Wilt thou that we hack him in pieces at once, after the fashion of the Bacchantes, or, after binding him hand and foot, shall we cut off his ears?"

"Nay," replied Meroe, whose name I presently perceived was in accordance with her character, and herself just the person Socrates had described her—"Nay, let him live. He shall live," said she, "were it only to scratch a shallow hole for this wretch's grave." So saying, and drawing the head of Socrates a little towards her, she plunged the blade of the sword up to the hilt in the left side of his throat, holding at the same time a small vessel so carefully underneath, that, as the blood gushed out, not a single drop fell on the ground. All this I witnessed with my own eyes, and more besides; for that pattern of humanity Meroe, fearing peradventure to omit some due observance in the immolation of her victim, thrust her hand down to the very viscera, and, stirring round and round, caught hold of the heart of my miserable comrade, and dragged it from its socket, while, through his windpipe severed entirely by the sword, his last breath came bubbling forth with an indistinct gurgling sound through the orifice. Panthia then closing up the gaping wound with the sponge, exclaimed, "Oh sponge! thou that wast born in the sea, beware how you pass a river." So soon as she had pronounced the latter words, both women left the room through the open doorway, but had scarcely passed the threshold when the broken door resumed its pristine

form and position, the hinges fell into their sockets, and the doorposts, bars, bolts, and fastenings were all restored to their proper places.

I, meanwhile, lying on the ground, prostrate and almost inanimate, drenched in cold perspiration, naked as a newborn babe, or a criminal condemned to the cross, and tormented by a multitude of bitter reflections,—the posthumous thoughts, as it were, of a mind that had survived its body,—reasoned with myself as follows. "What," said I, "will become of me in the morning when this poor man shall be found with his throat cut? Who, though I speak the truth, will believe me? Thou, a strong man, they will say, if not able to defend thyself against a woman, might have called for help; on the contrary, thou hast seen the throat of a man cut under thy very eyes, and wert silent. Why was not a similar outrage perpetrated upon thyself? Wherefore hath the pitiless cruelty of the assassin spared thee? Why hath the natural impulse to conceal the evidence of a crime allowed thee, the witness, to live? Return then, they will say, to the death thou hast escaped." Such were the considerations that, repeated over and over again, entirely occupied my mind without remission till, the night being considerably spent and the morning approaching, thinking it advisable to get away clandestinely before the dawn of day, and, albeit with trembling solitary steps, pursue my journey, I rose up, and, taking my portmanteau, put the key in the lock. But the bolt,

when I endeavoured to turn it, as it were, in its over-fidelity, notwithstanding the door had flown abroad of its own accord in the middle of the night, now delayed to obey the summons of its own key and refused to move. At last, after repeated turnings and grindings, I succeeded in opening it, and so soon as I was outside,

"Holla!" said I, calling to the porter; "where art thou? I want thee to open the gates of the Inn. I must needs be away before daylight."

"Open the gates of the Inn!" replied the porter, who was lying on the ground at the door, half asleep; "dost thou not know the roads are infested by robbers? Why what manner of man art thou to begin thy journey at this time of night? By my troth! thou art some rogue or other with a crime on thy conscience, and hast a mind to put an end to thyself. But the head on my shoulders is no pumpkin, nor care I to risk my life for such a one as thou art."

"The day will break speedily," replied I, "and nought can robbers take from a poor traveller. Thou fool, dost thou not know that to strip a naked man were work for half a score gladiators?"

"How do I know," rejoined the porter, as, overcome by sleep and laziness, he turned round on his other side; "how do I know," said he, "thou hast not murdered the companion that accompanied thee hither last night, and now wouldst fain make thy escape? And now I think on't, I had a terrible dream in the

night. Methought the earth opened and discovered the depths of Tartarus, and there, forsooth, I saw the hungry, ravenous dog Cerberus looking ready to devour me."

Perceiving very clearly by these words of the porter, that the pitiless witch Meroe had been induced to spare my life, not from kindness and commiseration, but only for the further gratification of her cruelty, and to reserve me for the torments of the cross, I returned to my bedchamber with the full determination of terminating my existence, and for some time deliberated on the speediest method of accomplishing the object. But fortune seemed unwilling to provide me with any deadly implement, nor could I find anything at all in the room to suit my purpose till I bethought me of the little bed I had lain upon. Accordingly addressing myself to it as follows, "Dearest little bed," said I, "partner in my troubles, and sole conscious witness of last night's events, thou that alone can bear testimony to my innocence, furnish, I pray thee, to a wretch now hastening to the shades below a weapon to effect his purpose." With that I immediately began loosening the bed-cord, of which I flung one end over a beam which projected from the window, and made it fast; and having then made a firm slip-knot at the other end, I inserted my neck in the noose. Then I mounted on the bed, where standing at a convenient height for the fatal operation, I was endeavouring to kick the support from under me, so that

my weight being thrown upon the rope, it might close my windpipe and stop my breath, when the rope all of a sudden, being old and rotten, broke asunder, and I, falling with considerable force upon Socrates, who lay close by, tumbled him off his bed and rolled with him on the floor.

At the same moment in came the porter, who burst into the room, exclaiming in a loud voice as he entered, "Holla! there; thou that a while ago wert in such a hurry to depart in the dark, what, art thou still snoring under the bedclothes?"

At these words, to my astonishment, whether owing to the discordant shouting of the porter, or to the accident of my fall, Socrates, who I thought was dead, instantly sprang on his feet, and at the same time exclaimed, "No wonder these hostlers are detested by all the travellers on the road! Why, thou inquisitive, ill-mannered fellow, methinks thou hast a mind to steal something, that thou comest hither thus like a robber. Truly, thou hast awakened me out of a sound heavy sleep with thy bellowing."

Overwhelmed with unexpected delight at the miracle, and embracing the porter in a fit of ecstasy, "Faithfullest of porters!" said I, "my friend, my brother, my father, my everything! never can I thank thee sufficiently for restoring to me the companion, of whose murder thou thyself when thou wast drunk awhile ago didst accuse me." Then I turned towards Socrates, and would have heartily embraced him too,

but Socrates, the moment I came near, hastily retreated from me, saying, as he pushed me away, "Why, thou hast a grievous bad odour; where canst thou have been?"

And with that he began to question me more particularly; but I, thinking it prudent to be silent on the subject of the night's proceedings, evaded further inquiry by uttering some absurd pleasantry, and purposely changed the conversation. Then taking him by the hand, "No more of ill smells," said I; "come, let us go abroad and scent the freshness of the morning air while we pursue our journey."

Upon which once more I took up my portmanteau, and having paid the innkeeper the expense of our lodgings, we set forward on our way. When we had proceeded a little distance, and by the strong light that the beams of the rising sun began to throw on surrounding objects I very attentively and keenly scrutinised the precise part of my comrade's throat which had been pierced by the sword, "Fool that thou art," said I to myself, "why, truly, thou wert buried in thy cups last night, and the overwhelming power of the wine caused thee to dream all these outrageous fantasies. For, behold Socrates safe, sound, and hearty! Where now is the wound? where the sponge? where even is the scar—aye, the scar—of a wound so deep, so recent, and so terrible?"

And with that, addressing myself to Socrates, "Well," said I, "may our trusty doctors affirm of

those who retire to bed crapulous with overladen stomachs, that heavy sleep and shocking dreams are the consequence; for there appeared to me in the night—to me who, in my evening cups, exceeded the bounds of temperance—most dire and dreadful images; nay, at this very moment, I feel as if I were in a state of profanation, sprinkled with human blood."

"'Tis not with human blood," replied Socrates, smiling; "neither, verily, with any sort of perfume art thou sprinkled; but, with regard to thy nocturnal fancies, I too in the night had a horrid dream, and methought my very heart was being torn from my bosom by the roots; nay, I distinctly felt a pain there, and even now not only do I pant for breath to think on't, but my knees tremble, my feet totter, and I actually require some food to refresh my faltering steps."

At these words of Socrates I lifted my wallet from my shoulder, and hastily taking out of it a piece of cheese and some bread, "Behold," said I, "thy breakfast ready for thee; let us go sit down under that plane tree."

Thither we removed accordingly, and I myself took some refreshment, while Socrates for some time ate with a greedy appetite. Suddenly, as I was looking at him attentively, he appeared to grow faint, and the colour of his cheeks being thoroughly disturbed, his countenance first became sallow as boxwood, afterwards turned deadly pale, till, the scene of the nocturnal furies being fresh in my imagination, I was struck with

such terror that the piece of bread I had put into my mouth, though a tiny morsel, stuck in the middle of my gullet, and would neither move up nor down. My apprehension, moreover, was increased by the number of people who now as the morning advanced were passing along the road; for none of them, thought I to myself, will believe that one of two companions can thus be apparently the victim of a violent death without detriment to the other. Meanwhile Socrates continued to eat voraciously, till, having devoured a very large portion of a most excellent cheese, and taken as much as he could swallow, he began to call very impatiently for water to drink. Now, as there was a gentle silver stream, transparent as glass, and still as a placid lake, gliding along, not far from the roots of the plane tree, said I, "Behold yon rivulet; its waters are bright as the Milky Way; go drink thy fill."

Socrates, at these words, immediately rising up, wrapped his cloak about his loins, knelt down on the level margin of the bank, and leaning forward with his legs doubled under him, bent down greedily towards the water. But the instant the tips of his lips came in contact with the moist, dewy surface, the wound in his throat burst open to its full profound depth, the sponge rolled out, a few drops of blood followed the sponge, and the inanimate corpse would unquestionably have fallen into the river had I not laid hold of one of the feet and, with the utmost difficulty, dragged it to the

top of the bank. * * * * * Thus died Socrates; and I, after passing some time in bewailing my unfortunate companion, buried him in the sandy ground in the eternal precincts of the river, whence, trembling fearfully, and as it were afraid of my own shadow, I bade adieu to my home and country, flying through many and various desert places, like a conscience-stricken homicide. At last condemning myself to voluntary banishment, I married another wife and have settled in Ætolia.

END OF FIRST EPISODE.

Here Aristomenes concluded his story; and his companion, who had listened to it from the beginning with obstinate incredulity, now turning round and addressing himself to me, "Was ever," said he, "a more fabulous fable invented, or more absurd lies ever told? Thou," he continued, "whom thy dress and appearance pronounce to be a person of liberal education, say, dost thou believe what he hath related to us?"

"For my part," replied I, "I consider nothing impossible, and believe that all things inevitably happen to mortals according to the decrees of fate. I think, moreover, that to thyself, and to me, and to mankind

in general, there happen many wonderful occurrences, so wonderful, forsooth, as to have been perhaps within an ace of never happening at all, which would altogether fail to obtain credibility in the eyes of an ignorant person. But this, by Hercules! I do believe most truly, and truly thankful am I for it into the bargain; we have been agreeably entertained by a pleasant narrative that has diverted us from our fatigue, and enabled us to pass over imperceptibly a good rough portion of a toilsome journey. Besides this horse of mine, methinks, hath also reaped the benefit, since his rider, carried along by the ears, as I have been, must needs ride lightly. And now, forsooth, here are we arrived at the gate of the city whither we were going."

That gate of the city was in fact the common termination of the journey and of the story; for there both my companions diverged to the left side of the road towards some villages, and I proceeded alone and entered the gate. When I had got inside, and had reached the first house of accommodation for travellers, I inquired of an old woman, the landlady, whether the city were Hypata; upon which the old lady nodded her head.

"Then," said I, "do you know among the first-class people in the town a person of the name of Milo?"

"Milo," replied the old woman smiling, "is one of our first-class people truly, if such be the title of one whose house is among the first in the city, for there it stands yonder, 'tother side the Pomœrium."

"Come, my good mother," said I, "a truce to this joking; to what sect does Milo belong, and what manner of household does he entertain?"

"Do you see," replied the old lady, "that house, the last of all, with windows looking towards the city, and the door on one side with a narrow street in front? that is Milo's house. Milo has abundance of ready money, but, though rich, hath a bad reputation; nay, they call him a low, grovelling fellow of extraordinary avarice; one, they say, who lives by usury, and realizes enormous profit on pledges of gold and silver. His household is miserable, his life secluded, and his occupation nothing but to count over and over again his rusty money. He has a wife and one solitary maid-servant, companions of his misery; and for himself, whenever he goes abroad, his dress is almost the dress of a common beggar."

At these words of the old lady I could not refrain from smiling; and saying to myself at the same time, "Truly my friend Demeas has been wonderfully kind and considerate in providing me, during my travels, with a letter of introduction to such a singular person as Milo appears to be. In his house, at all events, one need not be afraid of smoke nor dread the smell of the kitchen."

Thus saying, and thinking to myself, I walked on a little further, and presently, when I came to the door of the dwelling, finding the gate firmly barred and bolted, I began to call out for admittance. At last,

after I had called and knocked a good while, a young damsel opened the door and came out.

"Holla there!" said she, "you that are beating at the door so stoutly; what hast thou brought with thee to pledge with my master? What! do you pretend to plead ignorance? Do you not know that nought will serve you here but gold or silver?"

"Think not so unworthily of me," said I, "but rather tell me whether I can be permitted to see thy master?"

"Aye, marry can you," said she, "but tell me first thy business."

"I come from Corinth," said I, "and I have a letter from Demeas, who lives there, to thy master Milo."

"Stay where you are," said she, "while I go to my master and announce thee."

And having so said, she barred the door as fast as it was before and returned into the house. A few minutes afterwards she came out again, and when she had opened the door,

"My master," said she, "would fain see thee."

I then entered the house and found Milo reclining on a very small couch, and just beginning supper with his wife sitting at his feet, and the table very scantily furnished.

"There," said Milo, pointing to the table, "behold thy entertainment."

"'Tis well," said I, giving him at the same time Demeas's letter. Milo having read the letter hastily,

"My friend Demeas," said he, "has done well to introduce to me such a worthy guest as thou art."

So saying, and bidding his wife begone, he invited me to sit down in her place.

"Sit thee down," said he, taking hold of my garment, and pulling me towards him, as through bashfulness I stood hesitating to seat myself in the lady's place on the couch. "Sit thee down, I say, here; for we have no chairs, nor as much other furniture as we have need of, for fear of robbers."

I did as I was desired, and so soon as I was seated my host thus addressed me—

"Thy genteel figure," said he, "and, moreover, thy excessive modesty, lead me, if I rightly conjecture, to conclude that, as my friend Demeas informs me in his letter, thou art sprung from a good family; wherefore, I pray thee, despise not the humble fare you will meet with in this poor dwelling-house. The room next to this shall be thy bedchamber, and will make thee a comfortable receptacle, which though small will appear to me a great deal larger through the honour conferred on it by thy occupation. Live then with us in this house of mine as thy fancy leads thee; and if our slender household gods content thee, then wilt thou follow the glorious example, and wilt emulate the virtues of thy father's namesake, Theseus, who disdained not to accept the hospitality of the aged woman Hecale."

When Milo had thus spoken he called to the maid-ser-

vant. "Here, Fotis," said he, "take our guest's baggage; lay it carefully in yon bedchamber, and bestir thyself. Go, quick, to the store-room; bring towels for rubbing, oil for anointing, and all things needful. Then thou wilt conduct the stranger to the nearest baths; for truly fatigued must he be after his long journey."

When I heard these directions, and reflected on the account I had had of Milo's parsimonious habits, being desirous of establishing myself in his good graces, "None of the things you speak of," said I, "have I occasion for; such I commonly carry with me on a journey, and as for the baths I can readily find my way thither by making inquiry. But I truly am most anxious about my horse, for the beast has carried me stoutly; therefore," continued I, addressing myself to the maid-servant, "I prithee, Fotis, take this money, and go buy hay and barley."

Having arranged these matters and put my things in order in the bedchamber, I sallied forth to go to the baths; but before I went thither inquired the way to the Forum Cupedinis, in order to provide myself with comestibles. When I arrived, I found a magnificent supply of fish exposed for sale in the market, and, asking the price of some, was told an hundred pieces of money, which I refused to give; but bought them for twenty denarii, and was walking away with my bargain, when I was followed out of the Forum Cupedinis by one Pytheas, an old acquaintance with whom I had

been schoolfellow at Athens. He immediately recognised me, and coming up to me, embraced me very kindly.

"By Gemini!" said he, "my good friend Lucius, what a long time since I saw thee! By Hercules, not since we both left our schoolmaster! Tell me, I pray, what has brought thee to this part of the world?"

"All in good time," said I, "thou shalt know everything to-morrow; but I perceive I have to congratulate thee; for what do I see here? Truly am I delighted that thou hast attained the object of thy ambition, which thy dress, thy magisterial appearance, thy attendants, and those fasces serve alike to proclaim."

"Aye, by my troth!" replied he, "verily I am ædile and inspector of provisions; if it be to do marketing that thou comest hither, I can render thee good service."

I declined the offer, since what I had procured already was amply sufficient for my supper; but Pytheas having caught sight of the basket, took hold of it, and giving it a shake, in order to raise the fishes that were in it to a level surface, "What might you have paid for this refuse?" said he.

"I paid twenty denarii," said I, "and had trouble enough to persuade the fishmonger to take the money."

The latter words were scarcely out of my mouth when Pytheas seized me by the right hand, and immediately led me straight back again into the Forum Cupedinis.

"Now tell me," said he, "who sold you this good-for-nothing fish?"

I pointed to a little old man sitting in one corner of the Forum. Upon which Pytheas, by virtue of his ædileship, immediately began to harangue the old man severely.

"What now," said he, in a very imperial tone of voice to the fishmonger, "hast thou no mercy left in thee, neither for our friends nor for strangers, to ask such an exorbitant price for thy pitiful fish? Truly, if you persist to raise the price of articles in the market after this fashion, our city, now the flower of the province of Thessaly, will be deserted like a rock or a desert, from the dearness of provisions. But I'll make you smart for it; nay, I'll teach you how rogues are dealt with while I am a magistrate."

So saying, Pytheas, without more ado, emptied the basket in the middle of the road, and bade one of his attendants trample all the fishes under his feet till they were crushed in pieces; which act having been performed to my friend's satisfaction, he, contented with the moral discipline inflicted on the fishmonger, recommended me to leave the Forum; "for," said he, "Lucius, I have sufficiently disgraced the little old fellow, and am satisfied."

I, on the contrary, was astonished and almost in a state of stupefaction at thus being, owing to the sage advice of my schoolfellow, deprived at once of my money and my supper. However, I went to the baths,

and afterwards, when I had done bathing, betook myself to the hostelry of Milo.

When I arrived at Milo's house, I would have gone at once to my bedchamber. "But," said the maid-servant Fotis, "thy host is inquiring for thee."

Aware of his penury, I would fain have excused myself civilly, and said, "I had need of sleep rather than food to refresh myself after my journey."

Fotis delivered the message accordingly, but Milo himself came out, and, taking me by the right hand, courteously endeavoured to pull me in to supper, while I hung back and gently resisted.

"But," said Milo, "until you accompany me I'll not quit thee." At the same time enforcing the latter words by an oath, he urged me so earnestly that finally I was obliged to give way to his perseverance and obey whether I would or not.

Accordingly he conducted me to that couch of his where I had been before, and having reclined himself upon it, began to ask me a great variety of questions.

"How is our friend Demeas?" said he; "is he going on prosperously? What sort of a wife has he? How many children? What establishment of servants?"

I answered every one of the above questions separately, and also replied unreservedly to various minute inquiries relating to the object of my journey; but no sooner had I satisfied him on all these points than he became not less scrupulously inquisitive about my native town, and anxious to have intelligence of all the prin-

cipal people in it, especially the prefect, till, partly in consequence of my desperately long journey, and partly owing to the interminable series of queries he proposed to me, I became so overwhelmed with drowsiness that sometimes I stopped short in the middle of my sentences, and frequently became utterly incapable of pronouncing a difficult word intelligibly. At length the loquacious old man permitted me to make my escape and retire to my bedchamber, where, without fear of indigestion—for his conversation was all I had got for supper—I threw myself down on the bed, and freely gave myself up to the repose I had so much need of.

BOOK II.

Anxiety of Lucius relating to Witchcraft — Meets his Mother's Friend, Byrrhæna — Atrium of Byrrhæna's Palace — Byrrhæna cautions Lucius against the witch Pamphile, wife of his host Milo — Lucius, rejecting the advice of Byrrhæna, resolves to cultivate the acquaintance of Pamphile —Ingratiates himself with Fotis, Maid Servant of Pamphile — Lucius sups with Milo and Pamphile.

Second Episode.—*Diophanes the Chaldœan.*

Lucius sups with Byrrhæna.

Third Episode.—*Tale of Telephron, the Student.*

Lucius, returning home, kills three Men whom he takes to be Robbers.

So soon as the sun had chased the shades of night and ushered in the day, I awoke and instantly jumped out of bed, anxious, nay over-desirous, to become acquainted with all the rare, wonderful things to be seen in the neighbourhood. For now I felt I was in the heart of Thessaly, celebrated by the unanimous consent of the world for the incantations of magic; and, moreover, in the very city alluded to in the beginning of the story of Aristomenes. Thus agitated between the earnest desire to investigate and the physical impulse of action, being in an extraordinary state of suspense

and excitement, and examining everything about me with singular curiosity, finally my imagination became so wrought upon, that I fancied all I saw different from what it appeared to be, and believed every object some living creature that a deadly spell had transformed into another inanimate shape. The stones I kicked with my feet might, for aught I knew to the contrary, be men and women petrified; the birds I heard singing, feathered human creatures; the trees that surrounded the Pomœrium, people covered in like manner with leaves; and even the very fountains liquefied human bodies. Nay, I should hardly have been surprised, such was the state of illusion I was in, to see the statues and pictures begin moving and walking; to hear the walls speak; the oxen and live cattle of all kinds utter prophecies; and an oracle from the heavenly regions of light suddenly proclaim its edict upon earth. Painfully, as it were stupified with anxiety, perceiving no visible vestige of the things I was seeking, and continuing to wander all over the city, unconscious of my whereabout like a drunken man, I was reeling from door to door gazing at everything. I saw, when, all of a sudden, I found myself in the Forum Cupedinis, where I had been the day preceding There I beheld walking a little before me a lady, attended by a numerous train of domestics; accordingly I increased my pace, and soon overtaking her, perceived her at first sight to be a person of consequence. Golden earrings hung upon her cheeks, her dress was

covered with golden ornaments, and the stuff of her garments also was in-wrought with gold. When I came up with her, an elderly gentleman, her companion, who walked close at her side, the moment he saw me, exclaimed, "By Hercules, here is Lucius!" and, without more ado, embraced me. He then immediately whispered to the lady a few words I did not hear, and turning again to me, "Will you not," said he, "pay your respects to your relative? Go up to her and salute her."

"I am not acquainted with the lady—I dare not," said I, turning away my head, while at the same time the colour rose in my cheeks, and I stood stock still. The lady looked me full in the face, and, addressing herself to her companion, "See," said she, "he hath his excellent mother, Salvia's, good breeding, and is inexpressibly like her into the bargain—tall enough in all conscience, a plump slender figure, clear complexion, and flaxen hair, which, like her, he wears plain and without affectation. Then he has his mother's easy, particularly graceful carriage, and her blue beautiful eyes, that, keen and brilliant as an eagle's, wander in every direction." Then addressing herself to me, "My Lucius," she added, "I have nursed thee in these very arms of mine, and no wonder; for how could it possibly be otherwise, when not only am I related to thy mother by ties of kindred with the Plutarch family, but both of us had the same foster-mother, and were brought up and educated together?

Indeed we entertained the affection of two sisters for one another, and have experienced similar fortunes in matrimony; though thy mother's marriage, as regards rank, is superior; and she hath made a more splendid alliance. In short, I am your mother's early friend Byrrhæna, whose name probably you have frequently heard from your tutors; fain would I that you come to our house with the same confidence as if it were your own."

The time occupied by the lady in speaking having given me an opportunity to digest my bashfulness, "Parent," replied I, while we continued to walk along, "I am unable to do an uncourteous act, and having nought to complain of Milo, I cannot desert his house without a reasonable pretence. I will, nevertheless, most diligently, so long as I remain there, seek every opportunity, consistent with the proper attention due to my host, to pay my respects to you whenever I come abroad." Then we entered into conversation, and talking on indifferent matters, beguiled the time as we went; till having proceeded a considerable distance along the street, we arrived at Byrrhæna's dwelling.

In front of the house was a very beautiful atrium or quadrangle, with a column at each of the four angles, and each column supported a statue of the goddess Victory. The four statues stood each with extended wings planted upon a sphere, which unsteady support they appeared to be kicking away with their rosy feet; so that, though the voluble ball was motionless, the

figures seemed hardly to rest upon it, but rather to be suspended in the air. In the middle of the enclosure, precisely in the centre, fronting the spectator as he entered, was a singularly beautiful statue of Diana in Parian marble, whose gracefully balanced attitude and vigorous carriage rendered it a venerable, majestic object. This type of the deity was accompanied on each side by dogs, which, of Parian marble also, served for her supporters; while their erect ears, savage-looking eyes, dilated nostrils, and snarling jaws were so naturally sculptured, that on hearing the barkings of the live dogs in the vicinity one might actually have imagined the noise proceeded from the marble throats of the latter. Their attitude was the chef-d'œuvre of the sculptor's art, as, with fore feet and chests elevated in the act of running, their hind feet pressed the ground. Behind the statue of Diana, there was wrought out of a rough block of marble the similitude of a natural rock perforated by a cave, and overgrown with brushwood, leaves, moss, and herbage; together with vines, and here and there small fruit trees; and the reflection of the statue was seen upon the polished marble within the cave. Upon the extreme edge of the rock, above the aperture, apples and grapes hung pendulous, so exquisitely formed by art in imitation of nature, and so finely polished, that had fragrant autumn breathed upon them the tint of maturity, one might have thought to pluck and eat. Nay, reader, hadst thou leant forward and seen, amid other manifold truthful resemblances,

the grapes reflected in the water of a fountain that in a softly undulating stream emerged from below at the feet of the goddess, thou wouldst have seen the bunches agitated, like life itself, with gentle tremulous motion And yet, forsooth, thou wouldst not have seen all; for behold, as if in ambuscade amid the marble foliage, waiting the approach of Diana into the cave after bathing, and, though partly transformed and partaking the savage nature of a stag, there stood a figure of Actæon, gazing inquisitively on the shoulders of the goddess.

Thrown into a state of extraordinary delight by all these beautiful objects, while I was scrupulously examining one after another, Byrrhæna said a few words privately to her attendants, dismissed them, and, addressing herself to me, "Everything," said she, "you see here, I pray you, my dearest Lucius, look upon as your own. But I call to witness the Goddess, whose statue is before us, that I entertain the utmost fear and apprehension on your account, and am as earnestly desirous to set you on your guard, as if you were a son of my own. Beware, then—strenuously beware, I tell you, of the wicked arts and nefarious blandishments of Pamphile the wife of Milo, whom you say is your host. That woman is a most notoriously celebrated witch; mistress, as is generally believed, of all sorts of sepulchral incantations. The dreadful creature—who, they say, by the slightest puff of her breath upon the branch of a tree, a stone, or such other trifling

inanimate object, can extinguish the light of the sun and stars, submerge the elements below the depths of Tartarus, and dissolve the whole world into its original chaos—is particularly apt to take a fancy to a good-looking young man like yourself, when, no sooner does she become enamoured, than turning her whole heart and mind towards him, she invades his inmost spirit with her artifices, and binds him in the eternal fetters of profound love; or if perchance he be fastidious and resist her, she either changes her victim, in the twinkling of an eye, into a stone, an ox, or some other sort of animal, or annihilates him entirely. The thought lest you fall into such snares as these, troubles me exceedingly; and caution is the more necessary, since your age and appearance render you particularly liable to the attacks of a woman like Pamphile, whose devices and manœuvres are interminable."

Such was the counsel Byrrhæna gave me in a most earnest and impressive tone; while, on the other hand, the intelligence it conveyed on a subject relative to which my curiosity had recently been so warmly excited, rendered it so thoroughly inefficient, that far from feeling the slightest inclination to attend to her caution and beware of Pamphile, I resolved, on the contrary, to precipitate myself by a sudden jump at once into the abyss, and be a voluntary follower of her discipline, cost me what it would. Accordingly, I broke away from Byrrhæna in a frantic hurry, and ridding myself of the grasp of her hand, that seemed to hold me like

an iron chain, I hastily pronounced the word "Adieu!" ran to the house of Milo as fast as my legs could carry me, and although my accelerated pace gave me the appearance of a madman, communed with myself all the way notwithstanding, in the following terms: "Now, then, Lucius," said I, "be thyself and be careful; behold the opportunity, so long sought for, hath at length arrived, when thou mayest gorge thyself to thy heart's content with the miraculous. Thou art no longer a boy; but art able to grapple, like a man, with the difficulties that beset thee. Manfully, therefore, resist the wily arts of thy host's wife, Pamphile: but for the damsel Fotis, who hath wit and beauty, and a loquacious tongue that may enlighten thee on the object of thy pursuit, do all thou canst to gain her confidence and engage services that may aid thee. Did not the merry maiden arrange the chamber for thee yesterday night daintily? Aye, and when all was done, she seemed loth to leave thee; and more than once, methinks, on departing, inclined her head to cast a glance upon thee. Fear not, then, thus to exercise thy prudence in an agreeable and profitable adventure."

Such were the resolutions that, passing in my mind all the time I was running to Milo's door, I had an opportunity the moment I arrived of beginning to put in execution, for Milo and his wife were abroad, and Fotis, when I entered the house, was busily employed preparing a stuffed sausage for our dinner. The meat was already chopped upon a platter ready to be

immersed in a rich gravy, and the extraordinarily fragrant fumes assailed my nostrils with a pleasing odour.

Fotis was dressed in a style of scrupulous neatness, in a white, remarkably short-waisted, linen robe, girded by a bright-red riband; though I will content myself to speak of one alone of her various perfections, which I have ever considered the very first of female charms, according to the certain principles that regulate the consideration of the beautiful. And since the head is the most prominent and conspicuous feature of the person, and the native gloss of the female hair appears in striking and advantageous contrast with the gaudy artificial colours of the garments on the body and limbs, where could I have recourse to a more engaging theme?

The generality of women, conscious that their native loveliness surpasses the variegated and golden texture of their dresses, wear scanty clothing, and dispense with the upper portion of their robes, to display the roseate hue of their naked shoulders. And well they know, forsooth, that, deprived of her hair, and thus her countenance (may heaven avert such a catastrophe!) divested of its principal ornament, the most lovely woman upon earth, were she dropped from the sky, or born in the sea and nourished in the waves, or even Venus herself, surrounded by the choir of Graces and a whole host of Cupids,—nay girded by the cestus fragrant with cinnamon and balsams, never would fascinate a Vulcan.

How ineffably beautiful is the rich lustre of the female hair glistening in vegetative strength before the light of the sun! Reflecting in brighter and milder shades the hues of burnished gold and honey colour, then shining with the blackness of the crow, and radiant with the prismatic blossom-tints of the pigeon's neck! Again, when moistened with Arabian perfume, parted by the teeth of a delicate comb, and collected in a mass at the back of the head, it charms the approaching lover, and reflects his exhilarated countenance like a looking-glass. Such, in short, is the dignity properly belonging to this natural ornament, that whether a female be decked with gold, jewels, or silks, the most splendid articles of apparel, and all her adornment, are absolutely good for nothing, provided the distinctive feature of her person be not her hair.

Now the hair of Fotis was remarkable for the extraordinary simplicity of its arrangement, and derived grace from the absence of all manner of artifice. Gathered together in luxuriant tresses and tied in a knot on the crown of the head, at the time in question, some of the curls hung pendulous adown her neck and throat, and others in sinuous ringlets rested on her bosom, when, bending forward and stooping over the fire as I entered the apartment, she stirred the sapid contents of a saucepan with a brisk rotatory motion of the body and shoulders, that exhibited her delicate figure to wonderful advantage. Addressing myself to her, so soon as I came in—"Good morrow, sweet

maiden," said I; "verily thou art rendering good service with those fair hands of thine; fortunate indeed are they who presently shall taste the banquet thou art preparing."

"Away with thee from the fire," said she; "or the flame peradventure may scorch thee: nay, if a spark chance to go forth and light on thee, where then wilt thou find a doctor able to cure thee?"

"'Twere a pleasure," I replied, "to be roasted alive in thy agreeable company." * * * *

At this moment our conversation was interrupted by a knocking at the door, which Fotis having made haste to open, there entered a messenger from Byrrhæna, who brought me a complimentary present, such as it was the custom of the country to send to a newly arrived stranger. This present, or as it was termed "*xeniola*," consisting of a fat pig, two couple and a half of fowls, and a cask of very rare old wine, I received with due acknowledgments, and had scarcely dismissed the messenger, when Milo and his wife returned; upon which I left the house and went to the baths. There I remained till I received a summons to supper from Milo, in obedience to which, returning, I placed myself by his side at a plain, neatly laid-out table. Not forgetful, however, of the caution of Byrrhæna, I retreated far away from mistress Pamphile, from whose countenance, if I chanced to catch a glance, though never so momentary, my eyes, like birds smitten with the noxious vapours of the lake Avernus, suddenly fell on

the ground. On the other hand I comforted myself by looking very frequently at the damsel Fotis, who was waiting on us. When it was evening, and the repast over, Pamphile looked at the lamp for some time very attentively, and said she, "We shall have a terrible shower of rain to-morrow."

Upon which her husband inquired "How she found that out?"

"'Tis the lamp," said she, "that predicts it."

"Then," replied Milo, addressing himself to me and laughing, "the lamp we feed with oil is a wonderful Sibyl, who, from her observatory in the candelabrum, controls everything that passes in heaven, and watches the sun himself."

"Truly," said I, "this is only a primary experiment in this sort of divination; I can imagine it possible that the little flame, though ignited by the hand of man, may be endowed with cognizance of the greater celestial fire its parent, and thence have a knowledge of things about to happen in the firmament,—nay, by divine presage, may, as it were, announce the same to us here on earth. Why, at this very moment at Corinth, the place of my habitation, there is a certain stranger, a Chaldæan, disturbing the whole city by his wonderful replies to questions that are asked him, and disclosing the secrets of the Fates to the public for the consideration of a sum of money. He indicates the proper day when people ought to be married; the day

when the foundations of a city should be laid, to have endurance; the day to enter upon a commercial speculation, or to set forth on a journey, or to go on a voyage in a ship across the sea. Nay, I consulted him myself upon the probable result of my present journey, and was assured, among many other wonderful promises, that I should become an author, be the writer of an incredible fable, and acquire extraordinary renown."

On hearing the above description of the Chaldæan, said Milo, smiling, "What sort of person is he, and what is his name?"

"He is a tall man," replied I; "his complexion dark, and they call him Diophanes."

"The very same," quoth Milo, "and no other—that Chaldæan in like manner hath been in our neighbourhood telling many things to many people, and hath realised no small profit. And now, by my troth, while I think on't, I will tell thee a story about this Diophanes, whom fortune served scurvily at last, and played a cruel trick."

SECOND EPISODE.

DIOPHANES THE CHALDÆAN.

One morning, while Diophanes was enunciating the decrees of the Fates to a vast crowd of people standing round him in a circle, a certain merchant, by name Cerdo, desirous of knowing when he ought to set forth on his journey, advanced to the front and inquired of him the proper day. Diophanes told the merchant the proper day accordingly, and having taken the sum of an hundred denarii, paid to him as the price of his divination, and put it in his purse, which was well stocked beforehand, lo and behold! a young man of noble mien came gently behind him, and gave a pull at his garment. Upon which Diophanes, turning round suddenly, wonderstruck at the unexpected appearance of the other, and for the moment forgetful of his occupation, embraced the young man affectionately, and bade him sit down beside him. "How glad am I to see thee!" said he; "for truly anxious have I been about thee for a very long time. When didst thou arrive?"

"Early this evening," replied the other; "but, my brother, in thy turn tell me how is it thou hast made such a rapid journey hither by sea and by land from the island of Eubœa?"

Here that egregious Chaldæan, Diophanes, taken aback and falling into a state of mental abstraction, replied, "'Twere well if all our enemies and evil wishers had to undergo such a dreadful Ulyssean voyage as I had. For we had terrible weather, and were assailed by storms and hurricanes continually. Our ship lost her mast and rudder, and our pilot not being able to make the port, we ran aground some distance from the land; myself and all the passengers were nearly swallowed up in the ocean, had to swim for our lives, and lost everything we had. But this was not the end of our misfortunes; for having at last, with great difficulty, got on shore, and proceeded a little distance up the country with a few articles of necessaries, supplied us through the benevolent commiseration of friends and of strangers, a band of robbers suddenly attacked us, and we were a second time stripped of all we possessed. My poor brother Arisuatus, the only one of our party who offered resistance, lost his life by endeavouring to intimidate the assailants. They cut his throat before my eyes." While Diophanes was thus proceeding in a very doleful strain to tell the remainder of his story, the merchant, Cerdo, suddenly whipped up the purse containing the money he had paid as the price of the divination which the other had laid down before him, and was out of sight in an instant; upon which the loud fit of laughter that burst forth among the spectators awakened Diophanes from

his fit of abstraction, and he saw at once the blunder he had committed through his indiscretion.

END OF SECOND EPISODE.

When Milo had finished his story he afterwards continued to prose on for a considerable time in a strain of grievous prolixity, till I groaned inwardly in spirit, and took to myself no small share of blame for being the wilful cause, by the remarks I had made about the lamp, of bringing upon myself the penalty of his tedious conversation, and losing a large portion of the evening and its best enjoyments. At last exclaimed Milo, "Joking apart, master Lucius, I wish the Chaldæan may have predicted rightly as to the happy, prosperous journey that he promised thee."

"I ask thy pardon," replied I, determined to take courage and stand no longer upon ceremony, "but I will crave thy kind permission to bid adieu to Diophanes, and leave him to his destiny. Little doth it boot me whether the spoils he took from the people lie at the bottom of the sea or are lost on dry land, for my bones still ache grievously from yesterday's fatigue, and I must needs retire to rest thus early." So saying,

I immediately betook myself to my bedchamber and lay down to rest.

Early the next morning a servant of Byrrhæna arrived at Milo's house with a message from his mistress, to ask me to a little supper. I earnestly requested to be allowed to decline the invitation, but the messenger came a second time, saying the lady would take no denial; so, being in a dilemma what to do, I determined to make an oracle of Fotis, and be guided by her counsel. Fotis at first seemed little inclined that I should stir from home at all, but finally agreed that I should accept Byrrhæna's invitation—"though," said she, "have a care: return home early; for fear of the faction of mad-headed young nobles who infest the town at present and commit awful enormities. People are murdered continually, and their bodies frequently seen all over the town, lying in the middle of the streets. Neither are the guard of the Prefect of the province, in consequence of the distance of their location, able to prevent these outrages. Thy dress and appearance may cause thee to be waylaid by robbers, who will, moreover, have a contempt for thee as a foreigner."

"Sweet Fotis," I replied, "quiet thy apprehensions. Unwillingly do I go to sup abroad; and right anxious shall I be to return speedily and remove thy fears altogether. Neither shall I be quite alone or unattended; for, as is my usual custom on such occasions, I shall, by way of protection, carry a small dagger in my belt."

Having equipped myself accordingly, when the time arrived I proceeded to the house of Byrrhæna, where, as the lady was a person of prime consequence in the city, I found a very numerous assemblage of first-rate company and a most splendid supper, consisting of all manner of delicacies. The couches, with feet and mouldings of highly polished ivory, were covered with cloth inwrought with gold; and the capacious cups, unique in value but of extraordinary variety in design, were of all manner of beautiful graceful forms. One was of glass, beautifully wrought with embossed figures; another of pure crystal, a third of bright silver, a fourth of glittering gold, and a fifth exquisitely wrought out of a piece of amber. In short, there were such things to be seen here as one would have thought impossible to have been made by the hand of man. The dishes were abundant, the attendants of the table numerous, and their dresses splendid. We were admirably waited upon by young damsels; and frequently curly-pated youths offered to the guests cups formed out of precious stones, containing exquisite old wine. Presently lights were brought in; and as the tone of conversation became more convivial and animated, quizzing jokes were freely bandied from one person to another across the table, and the shouts of laughter were loud and frequent, when Byrrhæna addressed herself to me, and, said she, "What think you now? Will you be able to pass your time agreeably in this our country? Methinks our temples, our baths, and our public works

are excelled nowhere; and as for comestibles, we are celebrated for our manner of living. Here, too, a person may be at his ease, and do just as he pleases; for the man of business has the bustle of the Roman metropolis, while another of quiet domestic habits enjoys the tranquillity of a village. In short, all pleasure-seeking people in the province resort to Hypata."

"All is perfectly true that you say," replied I; "nor did I ever feel more completely at liberty in any other place I ever was in. But," added I smiling, "I am sadly frightened at the accounts I hear of the dealers in the magic art—of their dark mysterious dens and irresistible power. Why, they say that in this country the dead bodies cannot rest in their graves; that the corpses are mutilated, and pieces of flesh ripped from the bones for spells to enchant the living. Nay, 'tis affirmed that such is the wonderful fancy the old hags have for the flesh of a foreigner, if the native of another country happen to die, they exert uncommon nimbleness on the occasion, and either anticipate the time of the funeral procession by performing the business beforehand, or do their work of depredation upon the body while on the blazing pile."

"Aye marry do they," rejoined one of the guests at table; "neither is any living man safe from them. Ask one of our friends here, who can tell all about it, for they have grievously lacerated his face and spoilt his beauty."

At these words an uncontrolled fit of laughter burst forth among all the company, and the eyes of every person at table were in an instant directed to one of the party who sat by himself in a corner; moreover, the merriment was continued so long and pertinaciously that the individual became confused; and presently, muttering a few words to himself, was about to leave the room in a fit of indignation, when Byrrhæna addressed herself to him, and said, "Nay, my good Telephron, do not think of leaving us, but with thy wonted good humour relate to us that story of thine about the witches; my son Lucius here has never heard that wonderful narrative which thou hast told so often."

"Aye willingly would I, lady," replied he, "were the manners of the people about me in accordance with your affability and good breeding; but the insolence of some of these guests is quite intolerable."

The above words were pronounced in a tone of deep excitement; nevertheless, Byrrhæna repeated her request, and declared it would make her quite ill if the other refused; upon which Telephron, forced in a manner to do what she wished against his will, consented to tell the story. Accordingly he immediately proceeded to prepare himself with all due formality. First gathering up the covering of his couch to rest his elbow upon, then raising his body a little, and putting himself in the proper position, he stretched out his right hand after the manner of our orators, with the

third and fourth fingers closed, the rest pointing straight forward, and the thumb directed downwards, and finally, with a courteous smile upon his countenance, thus began:—

THIRD EPISODE.

TALE OF TELEPHRON THE STUDENT.

Before I had finished my studies, and while I was yet a pupil, I went to Miletus to attend the Olympic games. Desirous of becoming well acquainted with the celebrated province of Thessaly, I had visited the greater portion of the principal places—when, under evil auspices, I arrived one day at Larissa. By that time I had nearly got rid of all the money I brought with me for my journey, and was reduced to extraordinary shifts in order to economise the little that remained. So circumstanced, I was loitering about the town looking about me, when, coming by chance into the Forum, I saw, in the middle of the open space, a tall old man standing on the top of a large block of stone, and issuing a proclamation to the people in a

loud clear voice. "Any person," exclaimed he, "willing to undertake to guard a corpse, shall receive a good reward." On hearing these words, addressing myself to one of the passers by—"What is the meaning of the proclamation," said I; "do the dead men run away in this country?"

"Hold thy tongue," replied he. "Surely, as well as a foreigner, thou art a raw simpleton into the bargain, not to know that all over Thessaly, in the middle of which province thou art, the witches tear off pieces from the faces of the dead bodies with their teeth, to use, as the principal ingredients in their magic spells."

"I pray thee, tell me," replied I, "of what kind are the duties attached to this funebral guardianship?"

"Duties!" quoth the crier; "why, keep thyself wide awake all night, with thine eyes fixed steadily upon the corpse, neither winking nor blinking, nor looking to the right nor looking to the left, either to one side or the other, be it never so little; for the witches, infamous wretches as they are! can slip out of their skins in an instant and change themselves into the form of any animal they have a mind; and then they crawl along so slily, that the eyes of justice, nay, the eyes of the sun himself are not keen enough to perceive them. At all events, their wicked devices are infinite in number and variety; and whether it be in the shape of a bird, or a dog, or a mouse, or even of a common housefly, that they exercise their dire incantations, if thou art not vigilant in the extreme they will deceive thee

one way or other, and overwhelm thee with sleep. Nevertheless, as regards the reward, 'twill be from four to six aurei: nor, although 'tis a perilous service, wilt thou receive more. Nay, hold! I had almost forgotten to give thee a necessary caution. Clearly understand, that if the corpse be not restored to the relatives in the morning entire, the deficient pieces of flesh torn off by the teeth of the witches must be replaced from the face of the sleepy guardian. Thou, accordingly, in such case, wilt be compelled to suffer mutilation."

Thus spoke the crier; upon which I summoned up all my courage and said to him, "Cease thy proclamation —behold a guardian ready—name the precise reward!"

"A thousand nummi," answered he, "ready money, shall be paid thee: but beware, young man, and exert thy utmost diligence; for the corpse thou wilt have to protect from these execrable Harpies was, when alive, the son of a principal inhabitant of the city."

"Nonsense!" replied I; "such matters are but mere trifles. He whom thou seest before thee hath nerves of iron, and, like Argus, eyes in all parts of his body, that care not for sleep, and have the keen sight of the Argonaut Lynceus."

I had no sooner uttered the above words than, without more ado, the crier beckoned me out of the forum, and conducted me to a certain house, of which the principal entrance was shut up. He, however, introduced me through a small back door into an inner

chamber, where, the windows being closed, he pointed to a lady dressed in black, who was weeping and lamenting. Then, going close to the lady, he said, "Here is a person who hath engaged to take proper and faithful charge of thy late husband."

"I pray thee," replied the lady, addressing herself to me, while she flung aside the hair that hung streaming over her face, and disclosed a countenance beautiful in the midst of grief; "see thou doest thy duty vigilantly."

"Fear not on my account," replied I; "rather prepare a chaplet for the brows of thy victorious guardian."

The latter speech of mine seemed to please her, for she rose up quickly, and bade me follow her into another chamber, where the dead body was lying covered with a snow-white linen cloth. Then were seven witnesses introduced into the latter chamber, in whose presence the lady, having lifted the cloth from the dead body, and shed her customary tears at the sight of it, carefully enumerated all its members one by one, touching each with her hand separately. Meanwhile there stood at her side a person making notes on his tablets and writing all down, as she exclaimed, "Behold his nose entire, his eyes safe, his ears sound, his lips untouched, his chin perfect, etc. etc. etc. Do ye therefore, worthy Romans, bear testimony to this matter."*

* The formula of the Roman law :—"Vos in hanc rem, boni Quirites, testimonium perhibetote."

So soon as the latter words were pronounced in due form, all the parties signed and sealed the tablets, and the lady departed.

Just as she was leaving the room, "Lady," said I, "I pray thee give orders that there be delivered to me the things I have need of."

"What things hast thou need of?" said she.

"A good large lamp," replied I; "oil enough to last till daylight, a jug of wine, cups, hot water, and a plate of good victuals from thy supper table."

"Begone, foolish man," replied she, shaking her head: "think'st thou to find suppers and wine in a house of mourning, where not a puff of smoke hath been seen these many days? Dost thou come hither for the sake of eating and drinking? Betake thee rather, in the place where thou art, to tears and lamentations, and assume a manner of behaviour more suitable to the occasion. Give him," said she, addressing herself to a maid servant, "give him the lamp and oil directly, Myrrhina."

So saying she left the room, and the door was shut immediately.

Being thus left alone to comfort the corpse, I rubbed my eyes, and, in order to keep up my spirits, and fortify myself in the best manner I could against the attacks of sleep, I began to sing songs. Meanwhile twilight came, and night, and dark night, and night still darker, and the dead of night, and at last every soul in the house was overwhelmed in sleep, amid

silence the most profound. At this time my fears, having been for some while increasing to an awful height, all of a sudden a weasel came creeping into the apartment, and stopped close opposite to me. The animal looked so keenly at me, and with a degree of confidence so unusual in such a little creature, that my mind became more agitated and disturbed than ever; though presently I said to it, "Away with thee, nasty little beast, that art hardly bigger than a mouse, be off with thee to the mice; away, while yet 'tis well with thee; begone, I say."

At these words the animal turned tail immediately, and ran out of the chamber; but at the same instant I lost all manner of recollection, and fell into so profound a sleep that as I and the corpse lay side by side, not even the oracle of the god of Delphos could have determined, on looking at both of us, which of the two were the most dead. In short I was so utterly senseless that I required a guardian for myself, and far from being able to take any care of the corpse, I might as well have not been there at all. * * * *

The blast of the crested cohort had just sounded the réveillé, and awakened me all of a sudden, when instantly springing upon my feet I went, in a dreadful state of alarm, to look at the dead body. Uncovering the face, and carefully holding the light to it, I examined every feature separately; but I had scarcely time to satisfy myself that all was right and in good preservation, when the mournful widow burst into

the room, accompanied by her seven witnesses. Throwing herself forthwith upon the dead body, after weeping, and, in a state of great agitation, kissing it long and very affectionately, she rose up and began to examine and take an account of all its members by the light of the lamp. Then, so soon as she found everything in its proper place and as it should be, she turned round, and inquiring for her house steward, or Philodespotos, bade him immediately pay the good guardian, as she called me, his reward.

The money was accordingly given me without delay, while at the same time said she, "Young man, not only do I thank thee most sincerely, but, by Hercules, in consideration of the diligent manner in which thou hast performed thy duty, I will enrol thee among the list of my household."

Overjoyed at the unexpected hope of emolument, and astonished at the sight of the gold, I replied, as I tossed the shining pieces up and down, ventilating them as it were in my hand, "Lady, depend upon me as one of thy devoted servants, whose services you may confidently command in future on a like occasion."

The above words were scarcely out of my mouth when the servants, one and all, alarmed at the ominous nature of the expression, showered upon me the most bitter imprecations, and, snatching up every offensive implement they could lay hold of, attacked me in a body. One struck me in the face with his fist, another

nudged me with his elbow, a third punched my ribs, a fourth kicked me, a fifth pulled out my hair by the roots, and a sixth tore my clothes; in short I was not only stripped of my garments, but, ill-used and lacerated, as Adonis by the boar, or Orpheus by the Bacchantes, I was finally thrust out of doors, amid general clamour and hootings, into the street.

I had wandered a little way from the spot when,—as calling to my recollection the inauspicious, imprudent speech I had made, I was deriving some comfort, though the reflection came too late, by thinking that the blows and stripes I had received were not more or heavier than I deserved,—lo! and behold! the funeral procession of the dead body I had guarded, accompanied by the mourners, weeping and bewailing, and performing the last solemnities, with all the pomp of a public funeral given, according to the custom of the country, to a first-rate citizen, passed through the forum.

At this moment an old man, absorbed in grief and weeping abundantly, approached the bier, and tearing his venerable white hair with both hands, "Romans!" exclaimed he, in a voice strained to the highest pitch, though interrupted with frequent sobs, "I implore you, for the sake of your religious faith and public morals, to espouse the cause of the relatives of a murdered citizen, and wreak your summary vengeance on yon wicked woman, perpetratress of the desperate crime. 'Tis she and she alone who, in order to obtain an inheritance and marry her paramour, hath extin-

guished the life of the unhappy youth her husband, son of my sister, by poison."

The tears of the old man, and his lamentations delivered in broken, interrupted sentences, made a violent impression on the people; and his manner was altogether so plausible that the lower classes, giving full credence to his affirmation, became so violently irritated, that some proposed to set fire to the widow's house, and others, without more ado, were going to stone her. Nay, they actually encouraged the little boys to bring stones to pelt at her; while she, pretending to shed tears, and assuming as devout an air as possible, peremptorily denied the heinous deed, and called the gods to bear witness to her innocence.

Upon which said the old man, "Let, then, Divine Providence decide the truth, in answer to her denial. Behold one who lives among us, a celebrated prophet, Zaclas, the Egyptian. Already for a large reward hath he pledged to me his faith to recall the breath of the departed from the regions of death in the shades below, and reanimate his body for a few brief moments."

Thus saying, he brought forward before the people a certain young man, clad in linen garments, with his head close shaven and his feet bound with sandals made of palm leaves. Then said the old man, after having for some time kissed the hands and embraced the knees of the other, "Oh Priest! I implore thee, by the stars of the firmament, by the gods of the infernal regions,

by the elements of nature, by the silence of night, by the sacred island of the Nile and the overflowings of that river, by the mysteries of Memphis, and by the Sistrum of the island of Pharos, render unto these eyes, otherwise closed unto eternity, a brief moment of enjoyment, and pour into them a single slender ray of the light of the sun. The decrees of fate we dispute not, the right of the earth we deny not, but a momentary span of life for the consolation of vengeance we entreat and implore."

The prophet, having thus propitiated the gods, touched the mouth, and in like manner the breast of the corpse, three times with a certain herb, and turning towards the glorious sun then rising in the East, stood wrapt in silent prayer.

During the performance of this solemn scene, while the minds of the spectators were directed with intense interest to the forthcoming miracle, having already made my way through the crowd, I had mounted on a large high stone, and was standing close to the bier on the other side, steadily looking at the corpse, when, after the breast had become inflated by degrees, I saw the body grow gradually full of breath, till pulsation having returned to the heart, it raised its head and shoulders, and spoke from the bier as follows:—

"Tell me, oh tell me, why dost thou recall me to life? After drinking the waters of Lethe, after floating on the Stygian lake, why dost thou summon me to resume the luties of a momentary existence?

Cease, oh cease; leave me to my repose, I beseech thee."

When the above words had been heard to proceed from the newly-animated body, the Prophet became aroused to a state of higher inspiration, and exclaimed—

"Nay, but thou shalt illuminate the mysteries of a grievous crime, and relate all the circumstances of thy death to the people. Knowest thou not that I have the power by my prayers to invoke the Furies and rack thy collapsed limbs with torture?"

The instant the Prophet had pronounced these last words, the corpse on the bier heaved a deep groan, and said to the people, "A noxious draught was given me treacherously by my newly-married wife. Compelled to yield my warm bed to her paramour, I died by poison."

The egregious wife, on hearing the above words, contradicted the accusation with extraordinary presence of mind and audacity, and fell to arguing and wrangling with her resuscitated husband in an impudent, sacrilegious tone. Meanwhile the people that listened to the conversation between them became violently excited, owing to their espousing two different sides of opinion; for one party were for immediately burying alive the iniquitous woman in the same grave with the dead body, while the other, declaring that she was innocent, maintained that the corpse had told a lie.

The corpse itself, however, at this moment, when the clamour was at its height, decided the matter in dispute;

for, uttering another deep groan, it exclaimed, "Then will I produce incontrovertible testimony, and prove the truth by things not known to mortal man. Behold," it continued, at the same time pointing its finger towards me, "Behold yon sagacious guardian of my body, whom those hags the witches, after long striving to elude his vigilance, under various forms, without success, covered at last with a cloud of drowsiness, and buried in profound repose. Then did they, hankering after mortal spoils, call me by my name unceasingly, until my limbs, and cold stiffened joints strove with a feeble impulse to obey the magic spell. But the man, my guardian, whose name by chance is my name, alive in reality though dead asleep, arose instinctively at the sound of the mutual appellative, and walking in a state of senselessness, like an inanimate unconscious shadow, suffered instead of myself the intended mutilation. For though the door of the chamber was bolted, the witches entered through an unknown cranny, and first depriving him of his nose and ears, they replaced the truncated members by a waxen imitation, of so natural an appearance that human eyes are incapable of distinguishing it from the original. Behold yonder the wretch himself—he who hath received a reward for his vigilance at the cost of his nose and ears."

No sooner did I hear the above announcement than I became exceedingly terrified, and, immediately putting my evil fortune to the test, my nose came off

in my hand, and my ears slipped through my fingers on the ground. Meanwhile as the spectators burst forth in loud shouts of laughter, nodded their heads and pointed their fingers at me, I stealthily made my escape, streaming with cold perspiration, between the feet of the multitude. Thus rendered a ridiculous as well as a mutilated object, I never from that day returned to my native country, but concealing the want of ears by my hair, and glueing on a decent piece of linen cloth as a substitute for my nose, I have wandered about ever since from place to place as now you see me.

END OF THIRD EPISODE.

The guests being highly elated with wine when Telephron finished his story, the conclusion was hailed by renewed bursts of laughter, and they all proposed to drink his health, while Byrrhæna, addressing herself to me—

"To-morrow," said she, "is a solemn festival here in Hypata, one upon which we Hypatians of all people in the world exclusively have, from the earliest foundations of the city, propitiated the merry God of Laughter with jovial ceremonies. Your presence among us will add to our hilarity; would that you could tax

your native wit in our behalf, and by some quaint invention enrich our sacrifice to the great deity."

"By Hercules!" said I, "I will do my best endeavour to comply with your desire; right glad would I be to produce a garment of smiles worthy to be laid on his Godship's shoulders."

Just as I had made the above reply my servants arrived to admonish me of the lateness of the hour; upon which I got up immediately, bade a hasty adieu to Byrrhæna, and in a state, like the rest of the party, of crapulous repletion, set forth to stagger homeward with unsteady steps. So soon as we had got out of the house, and were turning the corner, trying hard to find our way along the first wide street, a sudden puff of wind extinguished our lamp, so that, from the unexpected change from light to darkness, we could hardly get on at all, and it was as much as ever we could do to proceed, knocking our toes against the stones all the way we went. We had contrived, however, to reach the last street, and arrive close to Milo's house, when, lo and behold, we saw three lusty enormous fellows kicking at the door with their utmost strength; and, far from being frightened at our presence, the nearer we came the more violently did they bounce against it. All of us naturally concluded they were most desperate robbers; so, snatching from my bosom, as quickly as I possibly could, my dagger which I had previously drawn on purpose and covered with my cloak, I threw myself in the midst of them, and

burying the point of my weapon deep in their bodies, I saw them fall pierced with many grievous wounds, and all three, one after another, breathe their last at my feet. Fotis, awakened at the terribly noisy battle, came and opened the door, while I, panting for breath and bathed in perspiration, immediately crawled to bed, tired as if I had slain the giant Geryon, and fell fast asleep.

BOOK III.

Lucius arrested for the Murder of three Citizens — Tried for his Life — Proceedings of the Trial — Unexpected termination of the Trial — Lucius finds himself hoaxed — Festival of the God of Laughter — Fotis the innocent cause of Lucius's Misfortune — Her interview with Lucius — Her Confession — Promises Lucius to give him an opportunity of seeing her mistress Pamphile transform herself into a Bird or other animal — Lucius witnesses the transformation of Pamphile into an Owl — Lucius, desirous of following Pamphile's example, through the mistake of Fotis is changed into a Donkey — Ingratitude of Lucius's White Horse — Lucius, in the form of a Donkey, thrashed by his late servant — Milo's House attacked by Robbers — Lucius seized by the Robbers, loaded with plunder, and driven away.

Aurora had already mounted her chariot in the heavens, and uplifting her rosy arm above the purple trappings of her horses, Night, at the coming of a new day, had renounced her dominion over my senses, when, heated at the vivid recollection of the last night's adventure, I started from sound repose. Overwhelmed with grief, I sat up in my bed upon my haunches, my legs bent under me, the joints of my fingers interlaced alternately, the palms of my hands resting on my knees, and I wept abundantly. My imagination

pictured to me the Forum, a trial, sentence of condemnation, and the hangman.

"For," said I to myself, "defiled as I am with the crime of a triple homicide, and besmeared with the blood of three citizens, there lives not a judge, mild and benevolent though he be, who can pronounce me innocent. Is this the glorious result of my journey predicted by Diophanes the Chaldæan?"

While such reflections were passing in my mind and I was deploring my evil fortune, I heard a great noise of people shouting in the street, and then a violent shaking at the outer door, which was burst open forthwith, and the magistrates with their subordinate functionaries, followed simultaneously by a miscellaneous crowd of people, rushed into the house and filled all the apartments to overflowing. Without more ado, though I made not the least resistance, two lictors, by order of the magistrates, seized hold of me, and dragged me away with them through the streets accompanied by a multitude of such extraordinary density that one would have thought the whole population of the city had collected in a continuous stream. Notwithstanding that I walked mournfully along, with my face bowed down towards the ground, aye, down to the shades below, I chanced to cast a glance on one side and perceived what surprised me very much—that every single person among the many thousands of people who surrounded us was laughing ready to split his sides. Nevertheless I was thus conducted through all the prin-

cipal streets, turning corner after corner, like the victim of a lustral sacrifice led in a circuitous procession to expiate some dire portent, till I was brought at last to the Forum and made to stand directly opposite the judgment seat. There the magistrates were already seated in their places upon an elevated platform, and the public crier was proclaiming silence, when, owing to the perilous pressure among the spectators, as well as on account of the public interest excited by the trial, there arose a sudden unanimous cry among the people to adjourn the proceedings to the theatre. The multitude accordingly removed without delay to the theatre, whither they ran with such extraordinary celerity that before we arrived all the entrances were blocked up, every seat in the cavea was occupied, and all parts of the building were stuffed up to the very roof, as thick as they could cram with people. Some clung to the columns, others hung upon the statues, several with their fore bodies thrust forward over beams and through the windows were only half visible, and very many, without the least regard to safety, but stimulated by the desire to witness all that was to be seen, had placed themselves in the most perilous situations.

Meanwhile, having been led by the ministers of justice through the proscenium, and stationed in the middle of the orchestra, so soon as I arrived there, the crier, who had a voice like a bull, summoned my accuser to stand forth. At this proclamation an elderly man immediately made his appearance, and a quantity of water,

regulated to the time allowed for speaking, having been poured into a small vessel perforated at the bottom like a cullender, with very small holes, through which it escaped drop by drop, he thus addressed the people:—

"Most worthy Romans," said he, "the case I have to lay before you is one of no trifling magnitude, but rather a question that especially regards the peace of the city, and is likely to afford a serious example to posterity in days to come. Wherefore it becomes the more necessary for each and every one of you to look to the upholding of the public dignity, and take good care that yon nefarious homicide who has cruelly murdered so many of your citizens be not permitted to exercise his butcher's trade among you with impunity. Do not imagine, I beg of you, that I am actuated by any privy grudge, or am addressing you under the excitement of animosity or personal hatred, but listen while I place the matter in its proper light, and faithfully relate to you the circumstances that took place last night. As for myself, I am the prefect of the night-guard, whose vigilance and assiduity no one, I believe, has hitherto ventured to impeach.

"Last night, going my rounds as usual and proceeding from door to door, I had nearly gone the circuit of the city, examining every thing in my way with the most scrupulous attention, when, nearly at the third watch, I perceived that barbarously cruel young man laying about him with his drawn dagger. Slaughtering on the right and on the left, three victims of his ferocity,

their bodies still breathing and palpitating, were weltering in their blood at his feet. Deservedly conscience-stricken at the heinous act he had committed, he immediately ran away, and escaping in the darkness of the night lay concealed in an adjacent house till the morning, when, by the providence of the Gods, who permit no such great crimes to pass unpunished, I, who laid wait at the door on purpose, took care to prevent him from starting on his clandestine enterprises any more, and now produce him before this court to receive a criminal sentence. You have consequently before you not only a prisoner contaminated by many murders, but a prisoner taken in the fact, and a foreigner. Press vigorously therefore to convict the subject of another country of a crime which, if committed by one of your own citizens, you would visit with capital punishment."

When my inveterate accuser had concluded the above severe speech, the moment he was silent the crier addressed himself to me, and asked if I had anything to urge in my defence—for now, he said, was the time to begin, if I had anything to say. For my own part, at that moment I could do nothing but weep ; not, by Hercules, so much on account of the bitterness of the accusation against me, as owing to the stings of my own wretched conscience. Nevertheless, the instant I was put upon my defence, an audacity, as if I were divinely inspired, suddenly arose within me, and I addressed the court as follows :—

"I cannot be ignorant," said I, "of the difficulty of that individual's position, who, like myself, pleads in his defence against an accusation of homicide, with the dead bodies of three murdered citizens lying exposed before him; or how arduous is the task, let him be never so truthful and explicit, to persuade so vast a multitude as are here assembled of his innocence. But if there be a sentiment of humanity that prevails among you, and I am allowed a patient public hearing for a little while, I shall have no difficulty in showing that it is not because I stand before you under peril of my life that I deserve to forfeit my life; but that a fortuitous accident and a reasonable feeling of indignation have been the means of my being subjected innocently to the reproach of the crime of which I am here arraigned. Last night as, at a later hour than usual, I was returning home from supper in a state approaching to intoxication (which state being itself a crime I will not pretend to deny), I had arrived close to the house where I reside—the house of your worthy citizen Milo—when I saw some desperate robbers in the act of forcing an entrance, and striving with might and main to wrest the door off its hinges. Already had they wrenched off the bolts and fastenings, and were meditating the immediate destruction of the inhabitants within, while one especially, the most able-bodied and ready-handed of them all, was urging and encouraging his companions. 'Come along,' said he, 'my boys—be brisk, my manly fellows; and all of you stoutly

attack them in their beds. Banish hesitation and sluggishness from your bosoms; let homicide, drawn sword in hand, stalk from end to end through the dwelling; let us slay the sleepers outright, and beat to the ground all who show resistance; for by leaving not a soul safe in the house we shall return home safe ourselves.'

"I acknowledge, on hearing these words, being armed with a dagger, which I am in the habit of carrying with me as a defence against similar atrocities, being in extreme fear on my own account, and being anxious to defend the family of my host and hostess, that I thought it the duty of a good citizen to make use of my weapon, were it only to endeavour to terrify and put to flight such outrageous robbers. But, Romans, the barbarous, blood-thirsty villains declined to run! On the contrary, they offered bold resistance; and when they saw me opposed to them in arms, drew up in regular order. Their leader, standard-bearer as it were, made at me with all his strength, caught me by the hair with both hands, bent my body backwards, and would have smashed my skull with a stone, which he called to his companions to give him, had I not the good fortune to make a sure thrust at him and overthrow him. Presently, by a well-aimed blow at another, piercing through his shoulder blade, I killed him clinging to my legs and biting my feet; and finally, as the third was all abroad and rushing wildly upon me, I ran him through the chest. And now,

having vindicated the cause of peace, having protected the house of my host, and having laboured for the welfare of the public, I should have imagined myself deserving of public approbation rather than liable to punishment. I have never before been accused of any offence; I have always been esteemed and well regarded in my own country; and have ever cherished an unblemished character as the first of earthly blessings. Neither am I able to comprehend why, because I was excited by a justifiable feeling of vengeance against three terrible villains, I am thus summoned to this place at all to clear myself of the accusation. For nobody can prove I had a motive to commit the crime I stand charged with, either through the desire of booty or from animosity to the deceased robbers, none of whose faces did I ever see till the encounter in question."

Having brought my defence thus far towards the conclusion, then stretching out my hands in a supplicating attitude, while tears burst forth afresh, I most pathetically invoked the commiseration of the public. Appealing personally to one after another, I besought them by their love to their children, and their regard to charity, till thinking their feelings touched on the score of humanity, and their hearts sufficiently wrought to pity, I was finally calling to witness the eye of justice, the sun, &c., and recommending my case to the providence of the gods, when elevating my eyes towards the spectators in the Cavea, I beheld, as if the

floodgates of risibility were let loose among them all, a general laughing and tittering; and Milo, my worthy host and acquaintance, laughing louder than anybody. "Alas! for the consciences and probity of mankind!" thought I in silence to myself; "the host in whose defence thou hast hazarded thy life and become an homicide, not only affords thee no comfort under thy misfortune, but sits there heartlessly laughing at thee!"

I had, however, little time for continuing these reflections before the proceedings of the court were interrupted by the appearance of two women, who came forward both together; one, dressed in black, with a child at her bosom, and the other, who followed the first, very old, and covered with exceedingly ragged apparel. These women, crying and lamenting most bitterly, passed through the middle of the theatre, proceeded with the most mournful air and gestures to the bier on which the bodies of the slain robbers lay, covered by a cloth, and there, standing over the bier, they shook olive branches they carried in their hands over the corpses. After making a dismal noise and howling, at last the younger woman addressed the court as follows:—

"Have pity," said she, "have pity, in the name of the public, in the name of the common law, and in the name of humanity, on the relict of a youth who has been cruelly murdered, and render her, I beseech you, the consolation of vengeance in her widowhood

as an atonement for the unmerited calamity. Protect too the fortunes of a child left destitute in his infancy, and by the blood of the assassin who has infringed your laws vindicate the public authority."

So soon as the woman had pronounced these words, the senior magistrate got up and addressed the people as follows:—"For the crime that the prisoner has committed, which not even he himself is able to deny, a heavy punishment must be inflicted; but apart from the question of his individual guilt, there remains with us the important consideration how to discover the accomplices of the atrocious deed. For without accomplices it is incredible one solitary person could have vanquished and deprived of life three so robust men as the deceased. Now it will be indispensable to have recourse to the torture to extract the truth; and as the accomplices of the prisoner have all run away and made their escape, the thing comes simply to this,—that the question be administered to himself. Then will he be compelled to say who they are, and we shall have the means of thoroughly putting an end to this formidable banditti."

When the magistrate had concluded his harangue, the instruments of torture used according to the Greek custom, namely, the wheel, heated irons, various sorts of scourges, &c., were immediately brought into court.

At this moment, while I was terrified and horror-struck at these formidable appearances, and my fears

were doubled at the sad idea of leaving the world with a mutilated body, the elder of the two women, who all the time had been disturbing the proceedings of the court with her loud bewailings, thus addressed the spectators:—"Most worthy citizens," said she, "I pray you permit the dead bodies of my wretched sons to be uncovered, in order that the contemplation of their youth and beauty may instigate a just feeling of indignation, and stir up the people's rage in due proportion to the crime, before you nail to the cross that villain, their murderer."

The spectators assented to the proposal of the old woman by acclamation, and the magistrate accordingly ordered the dead bodies that lay on the bier to be uncovered, and the coverings to be removed by myself with my own hands. In obedience to the command the lictors, without more ado, compelled me, as quickly as they were able, to comply. Unwilling to revive, as it were, my crime of the day before by a fresh display, I resisted and struggled a good deal; till at last they dragged from my side by force the hand to be used to my own destruction. But when that hand, against my will, overcome by stern necessity, and yielded reluctantly, was extended over the corpses, and withdrew the pall that overlaid them—Gracious powers, what a catastrophe! What a wonderful sight did I behold! What a monstrosity! How miraculous and sudden the change of my fortunes! A moment before my name was enrolled among the members of Pluto's

family, and my body the private property of Proserpine. Now, in a single instant, the face of affairs was totally reversed, and I stood staring in mute astonishment!

Words are incapable of describing the effect of the picture that appeared before my eyes! In short, the corpses of the murdered men were nothing more than three wine skins, pierced while in a state of inflation with various holes, that so far as I could call to my recollection, exactly corresponded, aperture for aperture, with the gaping wounds I remembered to have inflicted on the robbers, in my battle of the night before. At this extraordinary spectacle the inclination to merriment among the people, which had been for some time as it were smouldering, and very many had been able to restrain successfully, now blazed forth in full conflagration. The whole assemblage continued to laugh without ceasing until they were thoroughly satiated. Some laughed till their stomachs ached, others clapped their hands on their sides to relieve the tension, and all now began to move out of the theatre replete with mirth and happiness—several first coming up to congratulate me, and every one as he departed casting a look behind at myself. For my own part, from the moment I lifted up the pall I had stood riveted to the spot, cold and motionless as a stone. Nay, I had hardly more life in me than one of the statues or a column of the theatre. At last, before I had, as it were, emerged from the shades below, a tap of the hand from my host Milo suddenly brought me to my recollection.

Milo then kindly drew me towards him with gentle force, and,—while, the tears glistening in my eyes, I wept and sobbed incessantly,—led me, reluctant as I was to move, through retired streets and by-ways to his own house.

When we arrived there, he did all he could to assuage my grief and trepidation; but the indignation I felt at the injury I had received was beyond his power to relieve. Such was the profound depth it lay buried in my bosom, that neither were the magistrates themselves more successful. They with their attendants and all the insignia of office came to our house on purpose to console me.

"My Lord Lucius," said they, endeavouring to tranquillize my mind by their conversation, "we are not ignorant of the honourable family to which you belong, nor of the position you hold in society. Nay, the names of your noble celebrated ancestors are known throughout the whole province. Comfort thyself then, we pray thee, and cast away the sorrow and grief of heart that afflict thee. 'Tis not for the sake of contumely that the present trick, which hath caused thee such infinite pain, has been played upon thee; but 'tis a pleasant invention, an innocent agreeable prank, such as each revolving year we contrive on the day when we celebrate our festival in order to propitiate and enliven a jocund deity, the great God of Laughter. May the blithsome divinity acknowledge you as his benefactor, and accompany you whithersoever you go; may he be continually propitious; may he relieve

your bosom of present misery; may he protect your mind from future anguish; may he free your heart from the dominion of melancholy, and for ever may he clothe your serene brow with joyous smiles. For the amusement you have afforded us, the citizens have already pronounced a decree to your immortal honour: to you, as the patron of Hypata, a brazen statue will be erected."

To the above address of the magistrates I said a few words in reply, to the effect that "I duly appreciated the honours conferred upon me in so singular a manner by the very splendid city of Hypata, but that, with regard to the selection of objects for their statues and their pictures, I would venture to recommend the citizens to bestow the honour on some more worthy personage, one who either were older than myself, or at least had rendered the state a better service than to set them all laughing as I had done."

At all events in my answer I made choice of the most discreet terms that prudence could suggest, and when it was over and the magistrates were about to take their departure, feeling much relieved, I was enabled, as I bade them adieu, to summon to my countenance a momentary courteous expression.

No sooner were they gone, than a servant from Byrrhæna came running to the house with a message to remind me that the time was approaching of a banquet at her house, which I had promised the evening before to attend.

Terrified at the announcement, and, after what had passed, horrorstruck at the idea of going near Byrrhæna's house, "Tell thy mistress," said I, "that I would willingly obey her commands and wait upon her, but it is not in my power to do so without committing a breach of hospitality towards my host. For Milo hath conjured me by the presiding deity of to-day to remain with him to supper, and I have absolutely pledged myself to stay. Neither will he allow me to leave his company nor go abroad. I would therefore fain have thy mistress release me from my obligation until a future day."

Milo all the time I was speaking to the servant kept a firm hold on me, and so soon as the other went away, he insisted on conducting me to the nearest baths, whither, having ordered bathing implements to be sent after us, we went immediately.

So much did my mind recoil at the idea of being the laughing-stock of the public, that as we passed along the streets I kept out of sight as much as I could by walking all the way close to the side of my companion; notwithstanding which the people so nodded and winked and pointed at me that I was absolutely driven out of my senses. How I got washed, how I was dried, or how I got home, such was the intense sense of shame I felt, for the life of me I cannot remember. But at all events, after I had bathed, and found my way back to Milo's house, and partaken of his frugal supper, which I hurried over in extreme haste, the repast was no sooner

finished than I made the excuse of a violent headache caused by long continuous weeping, and craved an indulgence that was readily conceded to me—permission to retire to my chamber.

When I found myself alone I immediately threw myself on the bed in a fit of melancholy despondency, and was completely overwhelmed by a host of the most bitter reflections for some time, till, at the moment that my grief was at the utmost, the door was opened suddenly, and Fotis, who had just performed her service with her mistress, and left her in bed, unexpectedly entered my apartment. Advancing towards me with a lowering brow, a countenance disfigured by the contortions of mental anguish, and in manner and appearance as different from her former talkative, joyous self as can possibly be imagined.—

"I freely confess," said she, in a hesitating, timid tone of voice, "I have been the cause to thee of this day's trouble; take therefore, I pray thee," (at the same time drawing from her bosom a kind of leathern thong and offering it to me,) "this scourge, and have thy revenge on a perfidious woman; nay, even though thou inflict a heavier punishment than I deserve, take thy revenge, I say. But yet believe, I beseech thee, that 'tis not of my own will that the calamity hath befallen thee! Be the Gods more merciful than that through my fault or failing the very smallest pebble ever bruise thy foot! Rather would I suffer death than evil betide thee. Sad enough my lot if the act that

with a totally different intention I was ordered to perform, hath brought thee harm."

On hearing these words of Fotis an intense feeling of my usual curiosity immediately seized my mind; and with a burning desire to know the cause of all that had happened to me,

"Away with it," said I; "let me tear in a thousand pieces the most audacious and wicked of thongs that ever was seen, rather than it inflict a single stripe on thy sweet person, or fall in palpable contact with thy white, downy, dove-like skin. But tell me, oh tell me, I beseech thee, in strict confidence, what deed hast thou done, or how hath the perversity of fortune converted thy doing to my detriment? I take that dear face of thine to witness that no mortal in existence—not even thou thyself—could persuade me to believe thee capable of thinking aught to harm me. Nor can innocent intentions, even through the uncertainty or perversity of chance, ever be rendered culpable."

"I am sadly terrified," replied Fotis, who trembled fearfully, "I am terribly afraid," said she, in a low tone of voice, almost subdued to a whisper, "to unfold the mysteries of this house and reveal the secret performances of my mistress, and yet I think too favourably of thee and thy acquirements to hesitate to trust thee. For besides the dignity of thy noble ancestry and thine own lofty mind, the various sacred mysteries into which thou hast already been initiated have neces-

sarily taught thee to appreciate the holiness of secrecy and fidelity. Preserve then, I beseech thee, most religiously locked up in the lowest depths of thy bosom the things I am about to relate to thee, and let thy constant impregnable silence repay the sincerity of my narrative. For my regard towards thee so compels me to unfold mysteries entrusted to no other mortal on earth, save myself, that thou shalt thoroughly know the state of our house and the miraculous secrets of my mistress.

"First then I must tell thee that she who can control the elements, shake the stars in their spheres, raise the spirits of the dead, and enthral the divinities themselves, employs her magic spells on no occasions with more violent earnestness than on those which happen not unfrequently whenever, as is the case at present, she chances to cast the eyes of affection on a good looking young man. The object of her choice with whom she is now enamoured most desperately is a young Bœotian, whose heart she has been for some days using her most potent manœuvres to fascinate. 'Twas but yesterday evening I heard her—nay, heard her with these very ears—threaten the sun himself to throw a cloud of mist about his disc, and involve the world in perpetual darkness, provided he declined to move with accelerated speed to the horizon, and produce night prematurely, in order to enable her the sooner to begin to exercise her magical incantations. For the youth, as she was coming from the baths, by

chance was sitting in a barber's shop, where she happened to catch sight of him. Accordingly, so soon as she reached the house, she commanded me to go instantly to the shop of the barber and procure clandestinely the cuttings of the young man's hair, which, falling to the ground from the barber's scissors, lay scattered about the floor. In obedience to the orders of my mistress, I went thither directly, and was diligently, though slily as possible, picking up the hair by stealth when the barber observing me, 'Ho, ho!' quoth he, 'dost thou come here again, thou wretch, to steal the hair of the choice young men, my customers? Marry, if ever I catch thee again at these thy wicked pranks I'll have thee before the magistrates.' Then, suiting the action to the word, and roughly seizing me by the arm—for I must tell thee that, like my mistress, I have a notorious character for the practice of witchcraft all over the city—he scolded me bitterly, and began to search all about me, and finally discovered and took away from me the hair I had picked up on the floor and concealed in my bosom. The misfortune grievously afflicted me; for I feared my mistress, whose temper is violent in the extreme under similar disappointment, and is always wont to beat me on a like occasion, would use me cruelly. Nay, I thought of running away from her outright, and surely would have done so, had not a momentary thought of thee come across my mind, when I abandoned the idea instantly. Distressed, however, at the loss

beyond measure, I was sadly and dismally bending my steps homeward empty-handed, when passing through a street in the way I saw a man clipping with a pair of shears some goat-skins sewn together for the purpose of wine-bags, which were inflated and hung upon a wall. Perceiving that the goat-hair already clipped and lying on the ground was flaxen-coloured, precisely resembling the hair of the young Bœotian, I immediately picked up a good handful to carry it home, and, concealing the truth from my mistress, gave it her instead of the hair that had been taken from me.

"All this happened in the evening while you were at Byrrhæna's supper, when Pamphile, previous to thy return home, impatient for the approach of darkness, and aroused to a state of necromantic frenzy, commenced her deadly incantations. Then did she ascend to the upper part of the house, and enter a balcony commanding a wide sweep of prospect on the horizon towards the east, open on both sides, and covered by a shingled roof—a locality particularly suited to the purpose of her secret mysteries,—and there she began her operations by putting in order the implements of art belonging to her deadly workshop. Collecting together divers sorts of aromatics, tablets engraved with unknown characters, nails wrenched from ships wrecked on the ocean, limbs and remnants of buried and unburied corpses, noses, and fingers, pieces of flesh of crucified criminals sticking to the iron nails, blood-

stained daggers of assassins, and skulls from which the teeth of wild beasts had ripped the scalp—all these things she arranged in proper order; and then, after performing a sacrifice, and pronouncing an incantation over the palpitating entrails of the victim, she poured over them a libation of cow's milk, mountain honey, and wine diluted with spring-water. Finally, she took the goat-hair, mixed with it much perfume, plaited it in several different locks, tied all the locks in a knot together, and threw them on the live coals of a chafing-dish to be consumed. And now behold, no sooner had the goat-hair fallen on the fire and begun to smoke with a shrill crackling sound, than, through the irresistible power of magic, the parent bodies, animated simultaneously by the potent spell, and coerced by the occult force of the divinities, received human breath, and thought, and heard, and walked accordingly. Walking, they proceeded whither the odour of the burning spoils attracted their footsteps, and they instead of the Bœotian youth endeavoured to force an entrance through the door of Milo's house. This was the moment when, coming to the spot in a state of intoxication, thy brain confused by wine, and thy sight deceived by the obscurity of a dark night, thou, like Ajax in his madness, didst draw thy dagger valiantly, and wound, and slay, and lay about thee; and though truly thou didst not like Ajax destroy and mutilate whole flocks of sheep, yet didst thou perform a nobler act than he: for, letting out the wind, as thou hast,

from three inflated goat-skins, thine enemies were all laid prostrate without shedding a drop of blood. Therefore art thou no longer a homicide, but a goaticide."

Thus reassured and exhilarated by the narrative of Fotis, and answering in my turn jestingly, said I, "Well then, since the empty goatskins that I killed were three in number, I may account this first proof of my prowess one of the twelve labours of Hercules, whether the slaughter of the three-bodied giant Geryon, or the three-headed dog Cerberus. Wherefore I readily forgive thee the crime thou hast been guilty of, and entirely banish from my mind all the sorrow and anguish it has cost me, provided you comply with the request I now earnestly implore of you. Give me an opportunity — on the next occasion when thy mistress exercises her supernatural magic power, and changes herself into the form of any sort of animal —to witness the transformation; for I am most ardently desirous of seeing the performance of a deed of witchcraft, and thou, methinks, art not altogether a novice in the mysteries. Thus far, indeed, I know for certain, and, knowing, feel most sensibly, that notwithstanding I have hitherto viewed with indifference the charms of many a noble Roman lady, thy rosy cheeks, thy brilliant eyes, and thy shining hair have thoroughly enthralled my senses, and led me captive."

"Oh! Lucius," replied Fotis, "verily I will do thy

bidding at my own peril, notwithstanding that my mistress, because the public watch all her operations with extraordinary vigilance, performs all her mysteries in the most secret solitude, and in the presence of no living human being. But as I admonished thee in the beginning, preserve a profound silence in a matter of such awful importance, and I will diligently seek a fitting opportunity to show thee the desired spectacle."

A few days after the above interview, Fotis one morning running into my apartment in a state of great haste and trepidation, told me that her mistress, in consequence of the failure of her recent incantations, which, with regard to her design on the young Bœotian, had been unsuccessful, intended that evening to transform herself into a bird, and fly away to her beloved one. Accordingly she bade me prepare myself to witness the wonderful proceeding, and in pursuance of the arrangement, fulfilled her promise faithfully. At the first watch of the night, she came to summon me to the appointment, and conducted me, walking before all the way, with a soft noiseless step on tiptoe, to a chamber in the upper part of the house, immediately adjoining the above-mentioned celebrated balcony. Then Fotis showed me a crack in the door, and bade me look through it, upon which I looked, and saw Pamphile first divest herself of all her garments; and then, having unlocked a chest, take from it several little boxes, and open one of the

latter, which contained a certain ointment. Rubbing this ointment a good while previously between the palms of her hands, she anointed her whole body, from the very nails of her toes to the hair on the crown of her head; and when she was anointed all over, she whispered many magic words to a lamp, as if she were talking to it. Then she began to move her arms, first with tremulous jerks, and afterwards by a gentle undulating motion, till a glittering downy surface by degrees overspread her body, feathers and strong quills burst forth suddenly, her nose became a hard crooked beak, her toes changed to curved talons, and Pamphile was no longer Pamphile, but it was an owl I saw before me. And now, uttering a harsh querulous scream, leaping from the ground by little and little, in order to try her powers, and presently poising herself aloft on her pinions, she stretched forth her wings on either side to their full extent, and flew straight away.

Having now been actually a witness of the performance of the magic art, and of the metamorphosis of Pamphile, I remained for some time in such a stupified state of astonishment, that although not positively spell-bound by the influence of enchantment, I could have readily fancied myself divested of the figure of Lucius, and transformed into any other animal. In short, I was temporarily deprived of my senses, and in a waking dream. At last, after I had rubbed my eyes some time, had recovered a little from the amazement and abstraction of mind, and begun to feel a consciousness of the

reality of things about me, I finally took hold of the hand of Fotis, and, in order to make myself quite sure I was awake, placing that fair hand upon my eyes,—"Sweet damsel," said I, "by these eyes, that are thine in truth and for ever devoted to thee, render me, I implore thee, a proof of the regard thou hast professed for me, and bind me for ever to thyself with the bonds of an eternal unappreciable obligation. Bring me, I beseech thee, my Venus, a portion of the ointment with which thy mistress hath just now anointed, and when thou hast made me a bird I will be thy slave, and ever wait upon thee like a winged Cupid."

"Sweetheart," replied Fotis, "thou art cunning as a fox! What! wouldst thou have me let slip the axe upon my ankles of my own free will? Why then I shall hardly preserve my Lucius from the little she wolves of Thessaly!* When thou art once become a bird, whither shall I go to seek thee—where ever again can I expect to see thee?"

* The meaning of the passage according to the reading I have adopted from the Francfort edition of 1621—"*Ain inquit, vulpinaris amasio, meque sponte asciam cruribus meis illidere compellis? Siccine me vix a lupulis conservo Thessalis?*"—appears to be, that as the woodman who wounds himself with his axe in the forest becomes a prey to wolves, so does Fotis, by giving wings to Lucius, put herself in the power of her rivals the Thessalian damsels.

In the Paris Delphin edition of 1628 the same passage is rendered differently, as follows:—"*An inquit vulpinaris amasio meque sponte asciam cruribus meis illidere compellis? Siccine meum ipsa Lucium puellis conservo Thessalis?*"

"May the immortal gods decree otherwise," replied I. "Even were I the imperial eagle, Jove's trusty messenger and arm-bearer, soaring triumphantly through the skies, with the wide expanse of the firmament open before me, yet would I speedily renounce the dignity of celestial flight, and drop earthward to my nest. Nay, by that lovely knot of hair of thine, that hath so enchained my spirit, never, I swear, will I prefer any other human being in the world to my Fotis. Moreover, when thou hast time for reflection, little hast thou need to be jealous; for when I have anointed and become a bird, far, very far away will it behove me to keep from human habitations. A beautiful and agreeable lover, truly, were an owl for a fair lady! Why the moment those birds of night take refuge in people's houses, all manner of schemes are used to catch them, and when captured, they are nailed on the door outside the dwelling, to expiate, by excruciating torments, the evil destiny portended to the family. Lay then aside thy fears, lovely damsel, on that score; and rather tell me what I had well-nigh forgotten to inquire of thee. When I have become a bird, what deed must be done, or what sound uttered, in order that I may get rid of my wings, and transform myself again into Lucius?"

"Make thyself easy on that account," replied she; "my mistress has made me acquainted with every thing and substance necessary to restore all manner of metamorphosed figures to their original human form. Though I would not have thee think me in-

debted to her benevolence for a faculty which hitherto, forsooth, I have never exerted otherwise than towards herself, when, as on an occasion like the present, it has become necessary to disengage her from enchantment. The means to produce a result so important are marvellously simple—nothing more than various common herbs—for instance, a few grains of aniseed and laurel-leaves infused in spring water for a draught and lotion." Being quite satisfied on the latter point, and Fotis having given me the assurance over and over again, I finally prevailed upon her to accede to my earnest request. Accordingly, she crept gently out of the apartment, quickly returned with the box of ointment, hastily placed it in my hands, and then immediately departed.

Elated to an extraordinary degree at the sight of the precious treasure, I kissed the box several times successively; and uttering repeated aspirations in hopes of a prosperous flight, I stripped off all my clothes as quick as possible, dipped my fingers greedily into the box, and having thence extracted a good large lump of ointment, rubbed it all over my body and limbs. When I was thoroughly anointed, I swung my arms up and down, in imitation of the movement of a bird's pinions, and continued to do so a little while, when, instead of any perceptible token of feathers or wings making their appearance, my own thin skin, alas! grew into a hard leathern hide covered with bristly hair, my fingers and toes disappeared,

the palms of my hands and the soles of my feet became four solid hoofs, and from the end of my spine a long tail proceeded. My face was enormous, my mouth wide, my nostrils gaping, my lips pendulous, and I had a pair of immoderately long, rough, hairy ears. In short, when I came to contemplate my transformation to its full extent, I found that instead of a bird I had become changed into an ass.

No sooner was I aware of the misfortune that had befallen me, than, before I was able to give utterance to lamentation, Fotis at that very moment returned into the apartment, while I, not only deprived of human form, but of human speech also, looked at her reproachfully with tearful eyes, and bemoaned my fate in silence. Perceiving what an animal I had become, she beat her forehead with her hands in a paroxysm of grief, exclaiming "I am undone! I am for ever undone! Through haste, trepidation, and the likeness of one to the other, I took the wrong box of ointment!" Then, addressing herself to me, she added, "'Tis fortunate that the remedy for thy transformation is not difficult; again once more, ere long, thou wilt be my Lucius: nought more hast thou to do but eat roses in the morning, and then immediately thou wilt quit the form of an ass, and regain thy human figure. Would that this evening, as I am frequently used to do, I had plaited roses into chaplets; then thou wouldst not, even for a single night, have remained in thy present condition. Now, alas! ere I

can be able to procure thee the floral remedy, another day must dawn."

Thus did Fotis continue for some time to express her sorrow, while I, a perfect ass and beast of burden, though no longer Lucius, being nevertheless still in possession of human understanding, deliberated all the time with myself whether, in case she had intentionally deceived me, I ought not immediately to fall upon such a wicked creature, and bite her and kick her to death. But more mature reflection prevented my committing myself to such a rash enterprise, which, by inflicting the punishment of death upon Fotis, would have extinguished all chance of her assistance. Shaking my head therefore dejectedly, determining to bear in silence my temporary disgrace, and going to seek that very worthy horse of mine that I had ridden on my journey, I found him standing in the stable, together with another ass like myself, belonging to my host Milo. And now, thought I to myself, if there be aught of silent holy recognition and sympathy among dumb animals for one another, then will that horse not only treat me with common hospitality, but will behave to me, as the Romans behave to their ambassadors, most magnificently. But, oh Jupiter hospitalis, and all ye secret guardians of good faith, it was just the contrary! The moment that pretty nag of mine perceived me coming to the manger, he, together with Milo's ass, immediately inclined their noses towards one another, and plotted schemes for my destruction. Concluding

that I was advancing with the design to eat their food, they laid back their ears both together, and, furiously lashing forth their heels, drove me away from the very barley which, with my own hands, I had laid before an ungrateful servant the evening before. Being thus scurvily used, and, as it were, driven into banishment, I retreated to a solitary corner of the stable to ruminate on the insolence of my colleagues, comforting myself by the reflection that in the morning, the very first moment a breakfast of roses restored me to the form of Lucius, and enabled me to execute the design, I would have my revenge on the perfidious horse.

At this moment, while these thoughts and plans were passing through my mind, I suddenly looked up and perceived a small ædicula supported against one of the beams, which, standing in the middle of the stable, bore the weight of the roof; and within the ædicula there was a little statue of Hippona, the tutelar goddess of horses, wearing on its head, in addition to the usual articles of ornament, a chaplet of fresh blooming roses! Inspired with instant joy at the sight of the salutary spectacle, replete with exhilarating hope, and valiantly rearing upon my hinder legs, I rested my fore-legs on the beam as high as I could reach, stretched out my neck, extended my lips as far as I was able, and was making a violent endeavour to catch hold of the roses, when all of a sudden my servant boy, who had constantly charge of the horse, and was lying down beside him, most unluckily saw my proceedings. The boy, the moment he

perceived what I was about, springing upon his feet in a rage, "Thou brute of a jackass," said he, "what mortal being can bear thy doings any longer? A while ago thou wert for stealing the corn from my cattle, and now thou art robbing the statues of the gods! But soon will I cripple and set thee a hobbling, thou heretic." With that, looking about the stable for a weapon, and by chance striking his foot against a bundle of sticks on the ground, he chose the biggest he could find amongst them, a rough knotted cudgel, and began to thresh my wretched hide with it most cruelly. Neither did he cease to belabour me until a grievous alarm, that broke out all of a sudden, compelled him to leave off; for there arose in the house a most violent noise, accompanied by thumping and smashing at the outer gate, and a general shouting of the people out of doors that proclaimed the presence of robbers. The boy, terrified out of his wits, immediately ran away, while a troop of banditti, every one carrying a torch as well as a sword, their blades gleaming in the flames, like the rays of the rising sun, and illuminating the darkness of night, violently burst open the doors, and invaded every one of the chambers, while they guarded the outside of the building so effectually with their sentinels, that the neighbours were completely prevented from rendering any assistance. Meanwhile, with their heavy axes, they broke the strong bars belonging to the door of a room in the middle of the house, where Milo kept his money and valuables; and having speedily pos-

sessed themselves of all it contained, carried everything away in sacks. When, however, they proceeded to remove the things from the house, and for that purpose were making a partition of the booty among one another, the superabundance of their wealth caused them to be reduced to extraordinary shifts; for the number of packages to be carried was considerably more than the beasts of burden at their disposal were able to bear.

Accordingly they led out of the stable my horse, Milo's ass, and myself, put extraordinarily heavy loads on the backs of each of us, and, leaving an empty house behind, drove us away from the door, flourishing their large sticks over our backs all the way we went, while one of their confederates remained behind to watch and give notice of the measures taken by the magistrates in consequence of the robbery. Thus were we hurried along through retired bypaths of the mountains the remainder of the night, so that, in consequence of the extraordinary steepness of the road, the number of heavy packages on my back, and the distance we had travelled, I was almost dead before daybreak, and yet, in spite of our fatigue, we were still compelled to go on. At last it was broad daylight, and we were approaching near to a village, when a thought, calculated at once to relieve me from my painful condition, though at a late period, occurred to me. The village, when we arrived there, being full of people celebrating their ninth-day fair, I determined to promulgate my

miseries to the civil power, and claim their protection, through the venerable name of the Emperor. Therefore, so soon as I found myself in the middle of a crowd of Greek men and women, I made a strenuous effort to enunciate the august dissyllable, and pronounce the words "Oh! Cæsar" in the genuine Greek language. But, alas! though the "Oh!" came forth clear and sonorous, not a particle of the word "Cæsar" could I bring out for the life of me. Neither was my disappointment by the failure the only misfortune, for the robbers, exceedingly irritated at my discordant clamour, fell to threshing me with their knotted sticks, and persisted without remission until no human being alive, had I been dead and flayed, could have converted my hide to a corn-sieve.*

At last, after we had travelled some way beyond the village, we passed some farms and country houses, where, in a pleasantly situated little garden, a sight suddenly burst upon my eyes that seemed as if provided unexpectedly by Jupiter himself, on purpose for my deliverance. Among the various beautiful plants and flowers growing in the garden, were several new-blown roses, dripping with morning dew! Filled with exceeding joy of heart, and elated with hope, I was moving briskly, with open mouth and watering lips, towards the lovely prize, when a reflection important to my safety came across me, and bade me at once re-

* Such as, made of sheepskin pierced with holes, are in use in Italy and elsewhere at the present day.

frain from my present inclination. For, thought I to myself, "to accomplish the transformation from the ass to thy form of Lucius, in the midst of a band of robbers, were only to rush to certain destruction; either would they take thee for a wizard, and therefore destroy thee, or deprive thee of life at all events, in order to prevent the appearance of a living witness of their deeds." Such considerations compelled me to yield to dire necessity, and accordingly, with patient resignation, relinquishing the idea of eating roses for the present, I continued to champ the bridle under the form of an ass for a longer period.

BOOK IV.

Adventure of Lucius in a Kitchen Garden — Disappointed in search of an Antidote for his Enchantment — Caught by the Gardener — His escape — Pursued by Men and Dogs — Caught and cruelly beaten — Arrives at the Robbers' Cave — The Robbers' Dame — Conversation of the Robbers.

Fourth Episode.—*The Tale of the Robber.*

Departure of Robbers on an Excursion — Their return with a young Damsel — Her excessive Grief — The Damsel relates her History — The Robbers' Dame comforts the Damsel with an entertaining Story.

Fifth Episode.—*Tale of Cupid and Psyche.*

Having now pursued our journey till the middle of the day, when the heat of the noontide sun was exceedingly scorching, we turned aside by a diverging road, and entered a small village, where we went to a house inhabited by some old men, who were friends and acquaintance of the robbers, or so, at least, though I was an ass, they appeared, in my judgment, to be, by the cordial manner in which they embraced and conversed together. Indeed, they whispered to one another with an air of profound secrecy, and the robbers gave them things taken off our backs as if it were their share of the booty. Finally, they removed the entire loads from all of us,

and turned us loose in a neighbouring meadow to graze in the plenitude of liberty. For my own part, although I was perishing with hunger, not being yet quite habituated to make a dinner on grass, the sentiment of social fellowship was insufficient to detain me in the company of my own horse and Milo's ass, particularly as I perceived a quantity of kitchen vegetables growing in a small garden a little way off behind the stable. I went thither accordingly, and having boldly broken a way through the fence, filled my belly to my very heart's content with the greens, notwithstanding they were raw; and after I had done eating, I began to look round about me in every direction, and to invoke the gods to my assistance, in hopes of catching sight of the glitter of roses in some of the adjacent gardens. For the solitude of the spot inspired me with an additional inducement to attempt my transformation under circumstances where, after swallowing the remedy and casting aside the grovelling form of a quadruped, I might, when I recovered and stood up under the erect form of a man, be thoroughly concealed by shrubs and unobserved by any human being.

With such an object in contemplation, a host of agreeable thoughts and anticipations began to arise in my mind, crowding upon one another in continual succession, like the waves of the ocean, when suddenly, among the plants and shrubs that encompassed a mountain dale at a little distance, I espied, predominant among the foliage, the bright vermilion hue of roses. Delighted at

the spectacle, and not being altogether endowed with the heart of a brute beast, my imagination immediately pictured to me a grove inhabited by Venus and the Graces, in whose shady recesses the genial flower of the Queen of Love and Beauty flourished in more than ordinary splendour. So, invoking the divinity "Prosperous Event," I instantly struck off in a gallop, without more ado, and, by Hercules, no longer felt like an ass, but actually fancied myself going at the tiptop speed of a racehorse striving for the goal in the Circus. But, alas! this noble and remarkable effort of agility was not sufficiently rapid to outstrip the course of my evil fortune. For when I arrived at the spot, the space I had mistaken for a dale was nought but the bed of a river, and the blooming objects of my desire, not those lovely tender roses, moist with divine nectarean dew, the wounds of whose very thorns and brambles yield delight and blessedness, but a sort of inodorous flower resembling roses, and growing in little light red cups upon the trees that lined the bank. The leaves of the trees in question are oblong, like laurel leaves, and the faint-scented flowers are called by the common people in their rural vocabulary "laurel roses."

Finding myself thus entangled in the web of misfortune, I at once abandoned all further hope of preservation, and knowing those flowers and leaves to be fatal to all sorts of cattle, I determined voluntarily to destroy myself by eating the deadly poison. Accordingly, I was proceeding to execute my intention, though with

slow and hesitating steps, when a young fellow, who at once I knew to be the gardener, whose garden I had made a desert of, came furiously upon me. Having only just discovered the mischief I had done him, he ran after me, and, having caught me, began without ceremony to belabour me with a great stick he carried in his hand, and continued to distribute his blows so thick over all parts of my body, that I actually thought he would have killed me. And so, indeed, had I not taken my own part and defended my life, he certainly would have done; but breaking away from him, suddenly whirling round, and flinging my loins up into the air, I launched out my hinder hoofs at him several times in rapid succession till I sent him prostrate and severely wounded against a bank on the mountain's side. Then I galloped fast away from the place, but a woman, I suppose his wife, who was near the spot, a little higher up the hill, happening to look down below and see him lying on his stomach half dead, immediately ran towards him crying and howling so loud, that it seemed as if she had no other reason for her expression of pity than to bring me to destruction. For she aroused all the country people by her clamorous lamentations, and they instantly shouted to their dogs, and the dogs flew upon me from all quarters ready to tear me to pieces, while the men did all they could to exasperate and halloo them on, till certainly my life was placed in very imminent danger. Taking, therefore, counsel with myself to suit the emergency, when I saw such a pack of dogs, great in size,

and many in number, enormous animals rather fit to grapple with lions or bears than torment a poor jackass, all approaching with infuriated speed to attack me, I immediately gave up all hopes of running away any farther, and galloped back to the stable whence I came as fast as my legs could carry me. Thither, however, the rustics, after calling off their dogs with much difficulty, followed me, and, having caught hold of me, immediately tied me to a ring in the wall with a strong leathern thong, and began beating me so furiously that they most certainly would have put an end to me, had I not, by aid of a miraculous catastrophe, produced jointly by the pain of the blows and the abundance of raw greens I had devoured, been suddenly enabled to scatter in dismay the enemies in my rear, and afford time to my masters, the robbers, to come to my rescue.

The sun had descended from his meridian height and was slanting his beams upon the earth, when we were all once more led out of the stable, and a heavier load was placed upon my back than upon any of the others. Consequently, after we had gone through a considerable portion of the day's journey I was thoroughly overpowered and knocked up by distance and the weight of my load. At last, while, disheartened by the blows of the robbers' sticks and the pain of my battered hoofs, I was moving onwards limping and tripping as I went, we came to a gently flowing rivulet that pursued its winding course by the side of the road. Here I resolved to watch the first opportunity I could

seize and then bolt into the water, where, thought I, "Instantly bending my four legs under me and dropping down on my belly, there, in spite of the blows of all their sticks, will I remain: aye, sooner shall they run me through with a sword than compel me to rise." I moreover reflected that it was very likely that the robbers, seeing I was half dead and reduced to an extreme state of debility, might consider me deserving of an honourable discharge, and be content, were it only from impatience of being delayed on the road and the fear of pursuit, to divide the load I carried on my back among the other beasts of burden, and leave me a prey to the wolves and vultures without wreaking their vengeance on me any further. No sooner, however, had I completed the arrangement of this admirable scheme than it was thwarted by untoward fortune; for all of a sudden the other jackass, as if he actually anticipated by divination what I intended to do, pretended to be overcome with fatigue also, and instantly dropping down in the road, with all the baggage on his back, lay there like a dead creature. Upon which the robbers, perceiving that neither by beating nor by goading, nor by pulling at his legs, nor by rocking him this way and that way by his ears and tail, could they prevail upon him to get up, became exasperated by a delay which to them, under the circumstances, seemed the period of a man's life, and took counsel together as to what was to be done in the emergency. Considering the animal no better than if he were dead, or made of stone, they

determined to waste no more time about him; so they cut through the sinews of all his legs with a sword, and after dividing the load on his back between my horse and myself, dragged him, yet breathing, to the side of the road, and pitched him headlong over a high precipice into the valley below. Taking warning, therefore, by the fate of my miserable comrade, and knowing by the conversation I had overheard among the robbers that their place of habitation, where our journey would finally terminate and ourselves have plenty of rest, was not far distant, I resolved not to have any more recourse to treacherous tricks, but prove myself an honest ass to my masters for the time to come.

We had proceeded but a little way after the event above related, when we ascended a gentle hill and arrived at the place of our destination, where no sooner had we halted, than the loads were removed from off all our backs, and the things taken within the dwelling. At this moment, the instant I felt myself relieved from the weight of my burden, in order to obtain the refreshment of a bath for my weariness, I rolled myself over and over again in the dust. Whence, reader, it behoves me to arise at this period of my narrative to make trial of my abilities, and to prove to thee satisfactorily that though, indeed, at the present period I was an ass in form, I was not altogether an ass in sense and understanding. The things, moreover, that henceforth I shall have to describe alike require it.

First, then, with regard to the locality of the spot,

and the robbers' cave,—the part of the mountain where we now were was rough and rugged, covered with large trees, and rose to an extraordinary height. Winding paths, leading between craggy rocks towards the summit, were rendered inaccessible, and naturally protected on either side by holes, and fissures, and gullies choked with brambles; while below, the surface of the dales and valleys was overflowed by stagnant pools and the waters of a sluggish lake, which waters, from a source on the crest of the mountain, were vomited forth in bubbling streams, which first fell headlong over a precipice, and then pursued a meandering course downwards in various tiny silver rivulets. Immediately above the cave stood a lofty tower, and in front of the cave a small enclosure, like a sheep-fold, fenced with hurdles instead of a wall, and with a door formed of the branches of small trees; which enclosure, reader, on my authority you may call the robbers' atrium. Besides the above objects there was no other appearance of house or building, save a small roughly-constructed hut of reeds, where, as I afterwards learned, those of the banditti appointed to keep watch during the night remained.

Such being the appearance on the outside of the robbers' domicile, they having left us fastened to the adjacent trees with strong leathern thongs, now entered the enclosure, and thence, compressing their limbs in a crouching attitude, crawled one after another into the cave. No sooner had they arrived within

than immediately they began to call and shout in an angry tone; upon which an old woman made her appearance, who, notwithstanding age had bent her double, appeared to be entrusted with the entire charge of all these lusty young men.

"Why," exclaimed one of them to the aged dame, "thou that art, like a corpse on the funeral pile, a disgrace to mortal life, and Pluto's abomination, dost thou make game of us that thou hast thus been sitting at home all day idle? What, at this late hour, after all our labours and perils, hast thou nothing to give us for supper, and nought to think of but continually to pour wine down thy throat into that greedy growling stomach of thine?"

"Brave, honourable young gentlemen, my masters," replied the old woman, who seemed frightened out of her wits, "brave, honourable young gentlemen," said she, in a tremulous creaking voice, "all, all is ready—stewed meats, sweet and smoking in rich gravy, wine in abundance, cups cleaned bright, and plenty of loaves of bread. The water, too, for your hasty bath is heated as usual."

In consequence of the latter assurance of the old woman, the robbers immediately undressed themselves, and when they were stripped stark naked they sluiced their bodies with hot water and afterwards anointed themselves with oil. Then, while their limbs were refreshed by the warmth of a large fire, they reclined at the table, which was abundantly supplied with dishes.

Scarcely, however, were they severally arranged in their places than a parcel of other young men, many more in number than the first portion, entered the cave, who, without a moment's hesitation, one would have pronounced to be robbers also; for they brought with them booty of various sorts, such as abundance of gold and silver in money and drinking vessels, as well as silken garments embroidered with gold. And now the latter portion of the troop having alike with their companions refreshed themselves by a bath, reclined at the table among the others, with the exception of a few on whom the duty of waiting on all the rest had devolved by lot. Then, all at once falling to eating and drinking, in the most disorderly manner, they attacked the heaped platters of stewed meat, whole mounds of bread, and the cups arranged in soldierlike array all along the table. And when they had done they raised a violent noise by romping together, bawling forth songs as loud as they were able, playing all manner of jokes, and bantering one another; in short they behaved like so many Theban Lapithæ or Centaurs. At last one who in stature surpassed all the others, addressing himself to the rest of his companions—

"Right bravely," said he, "did we pummel that house of Milo in Hypata, and valuable is the booty that our strength and valour hath procured. Moreover we have returned back again to our camp in safety; aye, and if 'twere aught to reckon, with eight legs more than we started with. But ye who have been foraging

among the cities of Bœotia have your ranks diminished by the loss of the bravest of leaders, Lamachus, whom far rather had I seen here safe and sound among you than all the trumpery packages you have brought hither. Nay, while the memory of Lamachus, whom, no doubt, excess of courage stimulated to destruction, will hold a place among kings and noble leaders of armies, as for all of you, ye are nought but sneaking, cowardly fellows, who go crawling about the public baths, and commit your petty burglaries in old women's miserable habitations."

When the tall stout robber had finished speaking, one of the new comers to whom he had addressed himself replied as follows :—

"Dost thou not know," said he, "or art thou alone of all the men belonging to our band in ignorance that, of all manner of houses, such as thou hast spoken of are the most difficult to attack, while large houses are broken open with greater facility? Art thou not aware that in extensive buildings the apartments are scattered abroad, distant from one another, and in numerous families each person pays more regard to his own safety than the property of the master? But the frugal solitary inhabitant of a small dwelling, whether the valuables he has to protect be few or many, invariably makes a vigorous resistance in behalf of his property, and defends it at the risk of his life. Listen then, and by a tale that I will relate I will show thee the truth of what I say."

FOURTH EPISODE.

TALE OF THE ROBBER.

So soon as we had arrived in the seven-gated city of Thebes, as is the usual practice of our profession, we diligently made inquiries relating to the property of the inhabitants. Accordingly we heard of a certain banker, called Chryseros, who had the reputation of possessing a great deal of money, though, for fear of being appointed in consequence of his wealth to various offices and civil duties, he did all that lay in his power to conceal his treasure and make people believe he was poor. Dirty in his person and dressed in rags, he occupied a house which though small was strongly barred and bolted notwithstanding, and there, living in silence and solitude, he sat like a hen upon her nest, brooding all day over his money-bags. The house of this banker we determined to attack, imagining we should be able to possess ourselves of all his riches without difficulty or interruption; and as the resistance of one single pair of arms was a matter of little consideration, we made no preparation for the enterprise otherwise than to assemble ourselves one evening all together at his door at nightfall. When we arrived there, not thinking it expedient for fear of alarming the neighbours either to break the lock, or smash the door, or

lift the latter off its hinges, Lamachus, our sublime standard-bearer, confident in his well-tried valour, engaged to do the business single-handed, and, introducing his arm through an aperture made for the convenience of the people within to hang up the key, endeavoured to draw back a bolt that was on the other side. Meanwhile that most villanous of bipeds Chryseros, who all the time had been awake and listening to what we were doing, advanced in breathless silence, and, coming softly and stealthily to the spot with an enormous nail, made a violent effort all of a sudden, and nailed the hand of our leader to the wooden plank, leaving him there transfixed like a crucified criminal. Then immediately ascending to the roof of his wretched hovel, he bawled and shouted, and exclaimed that his house was on fire, till he alarmed all the neighbours, calling on the people by their proper names, and in the name of the public safety, to render their assistance. The people accordingly, stimulated by the imminent danger, and terrified on account of their own property, came running to the spot with alacrity, so that we should speedily have been overwhelmed with numbers, or reduced to the necessity of abandoning Lamachus, had not he himself devised a desperate expedient suited to the critical juncture. Instantly cutting off his arm right through the shoulder-joint, and leaving it hanging to the door, we tore our garments for bandages, enveloped the wound with abundance of covering, in order to prevent

our track being discovered by the dropping of the blood, and hurried our comrade away along with us as fast as he was able to go. But that courageous, noble-minded hero, thus urged to sudden flight by the grievous multitude of people in the neighbourhood that pressed upon us, perceiving that nought but flight could save us from our peril, and feeling himself incapable of keeping pace with the rest of us, while safety for himself on the spot where we were was out of the question, besought and entreated us by the right hand of Mars, and by all manner of prayers and arguments, to acquit ourselves of our oath of allegiance to one another and at once free a brave companion from the horrors of captivity and torture.

"For who," said he, "without a right arm can cut throats or plunder? Without a right arm how can a brave robber survive? Happy, thrice happy, were he to meet a voluntary death by the hands of his comrades."

Lamachus in vain continued to persuade us to accede to his wishes, for we unanimously refused to commit a crime that we considered no less than parricide, so at last he took hold of his sword with his remaining left hand, kissed it several times, and buried it in his bosom with so violent an effort that the point passed through and through his body,—and thus died our magnanimous leader. When he was no more, overcome with veneration for his courage, we speedily wrapped his remains in a linen garment, and committed his body to the river,

thence to find, in the bosom of the wide ocean, a place of concealment and a sepulchre.

Such being the termination appointed by Lamachus himself of a life celebrated for noble deeds, I will now proceed to relate how by the sinister influence of fortune Alcimus, another of our brave leaders, was deprived of existence, and how he miserably perished in spite of his well-concerted enterprises. Such was the misfortune we experienced on the occasion of attacking another small dwelling occupied by a lone proprietor like Chryseros. Alcimus, having mounted to the roof of the cottage of a certain old woman, had made a hole through the tiles, had descended into one of the upper chambers where the aged dame—whose windpipe, more is the pity, he forgot first of all to squeeze—lay asleep, and thence had thrown out of the window into the street, where we stood below ready to receive the articles, everything that the apartment contained worth carrying away. At last, after getting cleverly rid of all the old woman's goods, he came to the bed upon which she lay, so, rolling her out of it on the floor, he was proceeding to toss the blankets also after the other things out of the window, when the wicked old wretch threw herself on her knees before him, and, said she, "Nay, my son, wouldst thou cast out a poor old woman's miserable property to the rich neighbours? To yon wealthy people who live in the house opposite?"

Alcimus, deceived at this crafty speech, immediately looked out of the window in order to take a

survey of the vicinity, not only to assure himself that the plunder fell into no other hands than those of his comrades, but to scrutinize the indications of wealth belonging to the people opposite, and discover whether the account given by the old woman of the inmates of the house were true. While Alcimus was thus engaged, observing all without with sagacious vigilance, but, careless of his own safety, his head and shoulders stretched out of the window till his weight was over-pendulous and his body unsteady, the old woman, while his attention was fixedly engaged on his purpose, came gently behind him, and by a feeble but sudden and unexpected effort, throwing him off his balance, hurled him in a moment headlong into the street. In addition to the height of the fall, he alighted on an enormously large stone, where he lay on the ground with all his ribs broken and vomiting blood in a stream, till death, that left him barely enough of life to relate to us what had happened, speedily put an end to his torments.

Thus we, having suffered a double calamity in the loss of two of our comrades, resolved to abandon at once our Theban enterprises; and accordingly, performing the rites of sepulture as we had done to Lamachus, we committed the body of his worthy follower to the waves, and immediately departed on our way to Plateæ, the next large city. When we arrived at Plateæ, we learnt that a certain celebrated personage, of noble family and enormous fortune, by name

Democharès, remarkable for the splendour of his public entertainments, was speedily about to give a gladiatorial exhibition worthy of his great wealth; and the preparations then in progress were on a scale of such magnificence, that the most eloquent person alive could hardly find words to express the extent and variety. Already there were collected from various parts, and assembled in the city, bands of practised gladiators, hunters celebrated for pedestrian prowess, and gangs of criminals, who, condemned to be devoured by wild beasts in the arena, were meanwhile pampering their bodies with luxurious food, in hopeless apathy. Then there were also constructed and ready, moveable machines in the form of turrets, formed of planks lashed together like wooden houses, beautifully painted outside with pictures, and intended for receptacles for the performers during the festivity.

With respect to the vastly numerous collection of wild beasts, which, without regard to labour or expense, had been brought from foreign countries for the purpose of being made the living sepulchres of many a devoted victim, it were quite impossible to give an account of the number and appearance, though among them were also a great number of bears procured in the neighbourhood. Many of the latter animals, in addition to the ordinary apparatus of the ensuing spectacle, the immense fortune of Democharès had enabled him to obtain by purchase, others were taken in the chace by his own servants, and several were given him by friends, who

on the present occasion vied with one another in showing similar tokens of generosity. Meanwhile the envious glance of evil Fortune fell upon Democharès, and marred these noble preparations for the public amusement. Although all the bears were carefully and sumptuously provided for, they were suddenly visited by a dire pestilence, which, whether in consequence of their long confinement and want of exercise, or owing to the burning heat of the sun, reduced them to a sadly emaciated state, and killed the greater number. Such, indeed, was the awful mortality that prevailed, that very few were left alive; and, reader, you might have seen in the streets wherever you went, the dead and half-dead bodies of bears all over the town, lying like stranded vessels on the sea-shore. While the state of appearances, when we arrived at Plateæ, was as above stated, the ignoble vulgar, whom unmitigated poverty compelled to feed without discrimination, were flocking from all quarters to the city to fill their shrunken bellies, and batten on the sordid offal of the carcases.

The latter circumstance suggested to our comrade Babulus and myself a clever invention. In the first place, we selected from among the dead bodies of the bears that of a female exceeding all the rest in size and condition, and, as if we had need of the flesh for the purpose of nourishment, conveyed it to our habitation. There we stripped from the body the skin, with the head, separated at the neck-joint, attached to it, as well

as all the feet and claws; and carefully scraping the inner surface of the hide till we had considerably attenuated the substance, we sprinkled it with finely-powdered ashes, and exposed it in the sun to dry. While the oily matter was being exhaled by the force of celestial heat, we vigorously gorged ourselves with a portion of the sound pulpy flesh; and when we had made a hearty meal, we all took a solemn oath that one of our number—one rather remarkable for stoutness of heart than bodily strength, but a volunteer above all things—should be sewn up in the hide, and carried in the form of a live bear to the house of Democharès, in order to facilitate our entrance, on a seasonable occasion, in the dead of night.

An enterprise so plausible stimulated not a few of our brave college to undertake the execution, and finally our comrade Thrasyleo was selected from among many others to undergo the hazard of the die. With a serene countenance, therefore, Thrasyleo took hold of the hide, which was now rendered quite soft and flexible, and having wrapped it about himself in such a manner that his head occupied the neck of the animal at that part precisely where the spine had been divided, we brought the edges close together, and sewed the seams with fine stitches, overlaid with the thick hair growing along the line of juncture. Then we pierced small holes in front of his eyes and nostrils, in order that he might see, and have air to breathe. So soon as he was thus completely disguised, we purchased a

beast's cage for a small sum of money, into which Thrasyleo, who was now transformed into the perfect resemblance of a bear, with unflinching courage crawled. After the above preliminaries were arranged, and we had thus made a beginning, in order to carry the remainder of our design into execution we completed the manœuvre as follows:—

Having ascertained that in the neighbourhood there was a particularly intimate friend of Democharès, by name Nicanor, we addressed a counterfeit letter in Nicanor's name to Democharès, expressive of his desire to dedicate to the latter, in token of friendship, the first fruits of a hunting party. We then waited until late in the evening, and, availing ourselves of the darkness, or rather applying the obscurity of the season to an unholy purpose, we carried the cage containing our comrade Thrasyleo, together with the counterfeit letter above mentioned, to the house of Democharès. We had no sooner arrived there than Democharès, vastly delighted at the size and appearance of the animal that he believed to be a bear, in excess of joy at the liberality of his friend Nicanor, immediately took from the purse he carried about him ten pieces of gold, which he ordered to be given us by his attendants, "as a remuneration," he said, "for the pleasure we were the means of affording him." Meanwhile the people had already assembled in great numbers to view the large animal newly imported; and, instigated by the influence of novelty that invariably excites the minds of men on the

sight of any new spectacle, many were proceeding to examine him rather too inquisitively, had not Thrasyleo played his part so well, and so cleverly managed his menacing gestures, that he contrived to keep them all at proper distance. They declared unanimously that Demochares, sufficiently celebrated before in many previous instances, was the happiest and luckiest man alive, whom Fortune, determined to assist in one way or other, now that he had suffered so heavy a loss among his wild beasts, had once more condescended to uphold by this new arrival. At last, when all the people present were satisfied with the inspection of the bear, Demochares issued orders for its immediate removal to one of his farms, and was giving most particular directions relative to the manner of carefully transporting it thither, when, said I, addressing myself to Demochares, "Our bear, noble sir, hath suffered severely from fatigue and the heat of the sun during the long journey; beware, therefore, to trust her with others of her kind among thy herd, which, methinks, are hardly yet recovered from the late pestilence. Nay, well art thou aware that such creatures delight to roam at large in shady groves and on pleasant hills, and resort to moist caverns and cool fountains continually. Wherefore thine own dwelling, forsooth, whose open airy site is refreshed by the salubrious breezes of the adjacent lake, might peradventure afford a more suitable receptacle for the bear than the place where 'tis proposed to send her." At these words, Demochares, reflecting on the great number

of bears he had already lost, became alarmed at the admonition, and readily consented to have the cage, with Thrasyleo, carried into his house, and placed wherever we thought proper. Whereupon, addressing myself once more to Democharès, "Since heat and vexation," said I, "have marvellously afflicted the temper of the brute, and we are better acquainted with the proper times to give her meat and drink than a stranger, willingly will we, if thou think well of it, remain within all night and watch the cage." "We need none of thy services," replied Democharès: "daily practice hath sufficiently exercised my household in the treatment of bears, and right well do they understand the manner of feeding them."

So soon as Democharès had given us the latter reply, we made our obeisance and took our leave. We then departed out of the gate of the city, along the road, whence we soon diverged on observing a monumental building in a retired position on one side. On arriving there, finding the building to be a columbarium, we broke open the numerous receptacles of the dust and ashes of the dead, whose covers were already half destroyed by age and natural decay, and thus made ready convenient hiding-places for the booty we expected to obtain from the house of Democharès. And now a moonless night having arrived, such as, according to the usual observances of our sect, is always chosen for such operations, our whole band assembled at an hour when the first powerful impulse of sound sleep invades and

overcomes the hearts of mortals, and all of us stood, sword in hand, ready to fulfil the obligations of our oath, at the appointed spot. In like manner, Thrasyleo, with intuitive burglarious instinct, having hit upon the precise moment, simultaneously crept out of his cage, put to death every one of the guards who lay asleep near the door, and finally having killed the porter himself by a thrust of a sword, he opened the gate with the key taken from the latter, and let us all in. In therefore we all rushed immediately, and being speedily collected within the body of the building, we proceeded without more ado to break open the door of a chamber that Thrasyleo showed us, where, as he had sagaciously remarked the evening before, a large quantity of silver plate was deposited. Having by our united force accomplished the latter object without difficulty, I proposed to my comrades that they should each take as much of the gold and silver treasure as he was able to carry, and convey it with the utmost speed to the columbarium, there to be left in charge of those who, of all other mortals in the world, are most fitted to be trusted, namely, the dead; and that then they should return without delay to the house of Demochares to fill their sacks again. At the same time I said I would remain alone where I was for the general good, and taking post in front of the house door, would keep careful watch lest anything extraordinary might occur before they came back. For methought the figure of a great she bear, loose and running about all over the

house, was a most opportune safeguard, and sufficient to frighten out of their wits any member of the family that might happen to awake. Who, indeed, at the sight of such an enormous beast, especially a person aroused out of his sleep in the middle of the night, would not, however brave and intrepid he might be naturally, immediately take to his heels and run away in a state of fear and trepidation?—aye, and bolt himself into the cellar?

An unfortunate result, however, attended these judicious arrangements, as ill luck would have it; for, while I was thus remaining in a state of anxious suspense waiting the return of my comrades, one of the servant boys of the house happening to awake in consequence of a noise produced by some untoward fatality, crept out of bed, and the moment he caught sight, as he thought, of an enormous wild beast wandering at full liberty about the apartments, immediately retraced his steps the way he came, and in the most cautious manner possible, preserving the strictest silence all the time, communicated to all the inhabitants of the dwelling the spectacle he had witnessed. Accordingly the attendants and domestics of the extensive household being thus alarmed, made their appearance, without a moment's delay, in such numbers that the house appeared filled with a multitude of people, every one of whom, besides bearing a night light of one sort or other, such as a torch, a lamp, a wax candle, or a tallow candle, which altogether thoroughly illuminated the darkness with a

blazing light, carried also a weapon of some description, either a club or a spear, a drawn sword or similar offensive implement, with which they collectively guarded every approach to the house, and then brought a parcel of huge rough wolf-dogs to attack the bear.

Meanwhile, as the tumult continued to increase more and more, I retreated gradually, moving step by step backwards by slow degrees, till I got out of the house, and ensconced myself behind the outer gate, whence I had a view of the conflict, and perceived Thrasyleo defending himself most wonderfully against the dogs. Such, indeed, was the effectual resistance he opposed to his antagonists, by the various attitudes and movements of his body and limbs, that, though struggling as it were against the triple jaws of Cerberus, and though life was almost extinct within him, yet, mindful of his former glorious deeds, steady to his allegiance, and determined even to his last breath to fulfil the scenic part he had voluntarily undertaken, he finally succeeded, fighting at one time and retreating at another, to make his way out of the house. But, alas! though he got out of doors and reached the public way, he was yet unable to attain the enjoyment of liberty, for several other savage dogs belonging to the people in the adjoining street came rushing to the spot, and reinforcing the dogs of the chase that followed from the house, now mingled all together in a united pack, and attacked him conjointly, while Thrasyleo, hemmed in and surrounded on every side by the raging animals, was

severely lacerated by their teeth in all parts of his body. At last, unable to bear the cruel terrible spectacle any longer, overcome with grief, and anxious to adopt the only possible means in my power secretly to help my comrade, I mingled among some of the clusters of people who were hurrying to the spot from all directions, and addressing myself to those who appeared to be encouraging the dogs, "Shame, shame," said I, "to rob the people of their sport at the coming spectacle, and suffer such a fine bear to be destroyed in this manner!"

But the artifice was of no avail, nor were my words of any service to the unfortunate Thrasyleo. On the contrary, just at the moment they were uttered, one tall strong fellow came running out of the house and pierced his body with a spear; then followed, with drawn swords, a second and a third, and afterwards several more, all emboldened by the increase of their numbers, till, to the honour of our noble band, the devoted Thrasyleo, whom neither sword nor spear, nor the teeth of furious dogs, could compel to forfeit his oath or utter a cry or groan, submitted with vigorous generosity to his cruel lot, and yielded his life to fate with a growl worthy of immortality. Such, indeed, was the impression he created by his valour among the crowd, that the morning had elapsed—aye, and the day was pretty well advanced—before any of the inhabitants of the city, notwithstanding the creature that they took to be a bear was lying dead on the ground,

would venture to lay a finger on the body or even approach the carcase. At length, however, a certain butcher, who happened to be a little bolder than his neighbours, advancing at first timidly and slowly, and coming nearer and nearer by degrees, ripped open with his knife the hide of the bear and robbed it of the magnanimous robber, the brave Thrasyleo, who though lost to us still lives in glorious memory.

Forthwith we made a rapid retreat from the city of Plateæ, and having collected the packages of booty left under the care of the faithful dead at the Columbarium, we left the locality with a full impression on our minds that, scared at the wicked practices of our profession, thither had Fidelity fled and taken her abode. Fatigued with the weight of the loads and our long rough journey, and oppressed with sorrow at the loss of three of our comrades, such are the circumstances under which we have procured and brought hither the booty which now you see.

END OF THE FOURTH EPISODE.

Here the robber brought his narrative to a conclusion, upon which the remainder of the troop proceeded immediately to make a libation of pure undiluted wine, poured from golden cups, to the memory of their de-

ceased comrades; and after they had finished, having first sang a few songs in order to conciliate the god Mars, they all, one after another, fell fast asleep. My masters being thus employed, the old woman served out to myself and my horse such a quantity of barley without stint or measure, that my horse, no doubt, who had it all to himself, might have fancied himself at supper with those dancing gluttonous priests, the Salii. Meanwhile, for my part, although I had fasted so long that the spiders had begun to spin their webs about my lips, and moreover had had frequent opportunities in former times of eating good rich gravy broth made of well-dried, well-crushed barley, I now preferred to rummage in a corner where the robbers deposited their bread, and exercise my jaws upon the loaves I found there till a late hour of the night, when the robbers suddenly awoke, and, striking their camp, sallied forth without more ado on a predatory excursion. Away they all went, some armed with swords, and others disguised like hobgoblins, and hurrying away from the cave at a rapid pace, left me, whom sleep had not yet summoned from my occupation, chewing and chewing on most bravely and steadily. Such, indeed, was the profound depth of the belly I had to provide for, that although, in the days when I was Lucius, I should have departed satisfied from table after eating one or two loaves at farthest, I had now already devoured two whole basketsful, and was just finishing the third. Nay even when broad daylight disturbed

me busy at the work, and the modesty of a jackass compelled me to leave the provender, it was with pain and sorrow that I at length tore myself away, and went to slake my thirst at the rivulet close by.

Although the robbers when they departed had gone in full force and armed to the teeth, they returned again at an early hour in the day. Nevertheless they had taken no booty, not so much as an old worn out gaberdine, and all their countenances bore an anxious, discontented expression, notwithstanding they brought with them one solitary prisoner, a damsel, who, judging from the style of her dress, belonged to a noble family, and in appearance was a person such as, by Hercules! even I myself, although I was an ass, could not refrain from admiring. Meanwhile, as they led her into the cave, she tore her hair and rent her clothes and cried most bitterly; and they, on the other hand, doing all they possibly could to alleviate her distress of mind and persuade her to make light of her misfortune, comforted her with soothing words, as follows:—

"Thy life," said they, "is safe; neither shall any one offer thee harm. Have patience then; for 'tis the poverty of our sect that compels us to the necessity. Thy parents, moreover, albeit avaricious, possess heaps of money, and they right speedily will spare a fitting sum to procure thy ransom."

But such exhortations on the part of the robbers failed to alleviate in the slightest degree the grief of the damsel. No wonder! She on the contrary bent

her face on her knees and wept immoderately, till the robbers, calling in the old woman and bidding the latter sit near her, speak kindly to her, and amuse her with conversation, again departed out of doors on their vocation. The discourse, however, of the little old woman was quite unavailing and incapable of alluring her from her lamentations. She continued to cry and scream and scream and cry again, louder and louder, till her very stomach trembled, and her continual unintermitting sobs drew tears even from my ass's eyes.

"Miserable wretch that I am!" exclaimed she, "to be thus torn from my revered parents, my dearest friends, from all my family, and our kind good servants! A prisoner in a rocky cavern, a slave bereft of liberty, the ill-fated prey of a troop of banditti, deprived of all the comforts I have enjoyed from my infancy!—Cease to cry! How is it possible? How even can life be supportable? Here, while I remain among a host of savage robbers, a horrible troop of gladiators, without a single moment's safety, like a sheep in the butcher's shambles."

Thus did the poor young damsel continue to lament, till, in addition to her grief of heart, the muscular tension and convulsive heavings of her chest and throat produced corporeal lassitude and closed her languid eyes in sleep. But awaking suddenly again at a short interval, with a violent start, and springing up as if bereft of her senses entirely, she afflicted herself a great deal

more violently than before, cruelly smiting her beautiful face, and beating her bosom with the palms of her hands, while the tears showered from her eyes in greater abundance, and her sighs were more profound than ever. When the old woman inquired what it was that could possibly have caused this new paroxysm,

"All, all is now over with me!" exclaimed she, "utterly and everlastingly am I ruined and undone! Nay, I will hang myself, or drown myself, or throw myself over a precipice."

The old woman, hearing the latter exclamation, grew a little angry, and with a severe expression of countenance bade her declare what ailed her afresh?—what caused her to rise from her sleep so suddenly?—and wherefore she gave way to such ungovernable lamentations?

"Surely," said she, "thou hast not a mind to defraud my young men of thy ransom money? But let's have no more on't, for, by my troth, little do robbers care for a young maiden's tears, I can tell thee; and if thou dost not cease, and that right quickly, I'll have thee burnt alive."

The young damsel was sadly terrified at the above speech of the old woman, and immediately kissing her hand, "Good mother," said she, "have a little patience; spare me, I beseech thee, and pity, for the love of humanity, my sad misfortune. Thy grey hairs have made thee venerable, and age that hath brought thee experience surely hath not entirely dried up the

source of pity in thy bosom. Listen then, oh listen, I pray thee, to the tale of wretchedness that I will unfold to thee.

"I was pledged in the bonds of mutual love to a handsome youth, a citizen of high consideration, whom the public had unanimously dignified with civic honours. He was my own first cousin, three years only older than myself, with whom I had been brought up and educated in the same house from my infancy. The nuptial day, by the consent of our parents, was already appointed; our names were inscribed on the tablets; victims had been sacrificed in the temples and on the public altars; our house was crowded with a throng of friends and acquaintance invited to the ceremony; the chambers were illuminated with torches, and the walls entirely covered with laurel leaves—when all of a sudden, while the whole assemblage were chanting the hymeneal song, and my mother, supporting me on her bosom, was arranging my bridal dress in simple form, and tenderly whispering in my ear her parental aspirations and her future hopes, her kisses were at once interrupted by a number of armed men who, formed in a compact, wedge-like band, waving their naked glittering swords, and raging as in the moment of battle, came rushing like gladiators into the chamber. To shed blood they cared not, neither did they seek for plunder; but, although not a single individual of the servants opposed their progress nor offered the least resistance,

they forcibly tore me, trembling and half dead with fear, from my mother's arms. Thus was our marriage put an end to, like the nuptials of Perithous and the daughter of Athrax, and a most horrible dream, immediately before I awoke, renewed all my misery.

"For methought people were carrying me by violence through solitary desert places, away from house and home and friends; and although, calling and reiterating the name of my husband, I refused to walk, they still continually persisted to hurry me along. Then methought I saw my husband dressed in his bridal dress and crowned with chaplets. And everywhere we went, methought my husband followed me. And methought he called to the people for assistance, and he said I was his lovely wife, and the people listened to the clamour and became excited; and then the robbers grew angry, but still my husband followed, followed on unceasingly. At last methought one robber burst into a terrible rage, and took up a great stone that lay in the road, and threw the stone at my wretched husband, and killed my husband on the spot. And so the horrible sight frightened me out of my sleep and I started up."

When the damsel had related her dream to the old woman, she again wept violently, and the other heaving a sigh at the sight of the poor maiden's tears thus addressed her:—

"Be of good cheer, my young mistress," said she, "and be not terrified at the idle phantasies of dreams.

Besides, dreams dreamt in the day time are never accounted true, and frequently even the events that appear in a dream during the night eventually happen quite contrary. To dream of weeping, for example, or of being beaten, nay, even to dream thou art killed outright, is nought than a sure sign of marvellous good fortune; while to think thou art laughing, or stuffing thyself with sweetmeats, is a certain foreboding of evil, followed always by sorrow, sickness, or some dire misfortune. But I will tell thee an old woman's story; and if thou wilt listen to my pretty tale 'twill speedily cause thee to forget all thy trouble."

The old woman having thus spoken began without more ado as follows:—

FIFTH EPISODE.

CUPID AND PSYCHE.

Once upon a time, in a certain city, there lived a king and a queen, and they had three fair daughters. The charms of the two elder sisters were a fitting and a constant theme of praise for all mankind, but the transcendent loveliness of the younger baffled the power of human language, and words were insufficient to con-

vey an adequate idea of the perfection of her beauty. The busy tongue of Fame attracted to the spot great numbers of the citizens, and strangers from foreign parts, to view the extraordinary spectacle; but, unable to approach the radiant image, they all halted before her presence in mute astonishment, and placing their hands before their faces, in the attitude prescribed at the solemnities of the goddess Venus, stood stupified and riveted to the spot. Forthwith, accordingly, tidings were spread abroad through the adjacent provinces and among the neighbouring cities, that the celebrated divinity, engendered in the azure depths of the ocean, and nourished on the foamy dew of the waves, had abjured her celestial sway, and mingled indiscriminately with mortals in all parts of the earth; or at least that another Venus, other than the Venus of the sea, had dropped from the celestial stars, or been born on earth. And now, as the news, travelling from day to day with increased rapidity, and speedily traversing the islands in the vicinity, extended over various of the continental provinces, many were the mortals who, by long journeys by land and by sea, flocked to see the glorious specimen of the age, while the votaries of Venus no longer set sail in ships to Paphos, nor to Cnidos, nor even to Cythera, to visit her principal shrines, but her sacrifices were unperformed, her temples were desecrated, her pedestals overturned, and her ceremonies neglected — chaplets were no longer brought to decorate her images, and cold extinguished

ashes disgraced her widowed altars. A divinity, in short, was idealized in a human countenance, and the great goddess of Love was worshipped in the person of a mortal maid, whom the people conciliated by banquets and the sacrifice of victims, instead of the absent Venus. And every morning as she walked abroad, they threw flowers and nosegays on her path, in testimony of their veneration.

The true and real Venus, grievously incensed at heart at the undisguised translation of celestial honours to a creature of human race, indignantly shook her head, and muttering aloud to herself in her impatience, exclaimed, with increasing tone of voice, "What! shall Venus, the first early parent of the universe, the initiative source of the elements, the nurse of the terrestrial world, be thus treated? Submit to participate with a mortal damsel honours alone due to her own majesty? Shall mortal dross profane a name perpetuated in heaven? Shall the uncertain homage of vicarious worship at a common altar be permitted? Nay, forsooth, shall a short-lived mortal maiden thus walk abroad under my likeness? As if 'twere for nought that the shepherd of Mount Ida pronounced a verdict whose accuracy and justice even great Jove himself applauded, and preferred my unparalleled beauty to the beauty of the other goddesses! Whosoever she be that hath thus obtained these honours, verily will I ere long make her repent the usurpation of my beauty."

Thus spake the goddess, and forthwith summoned to

her presence her winged son, that evil-mannered saucy scapegrace, who—petulant by natural disposition, capable of nothing good, armed with flames and darts, and holding in contempt all manner of social obligations—runs by night from house to house, is the cause of innumerable bickerings in private families, and does all manner of mischief with impunity. Such was the youth whom the goddess conducted to the above-mentioned city, and, groaning with rage and indignation, having brought him to the presence of Psyche, for that was the name of the damsel, she acquainted him with all that had happened to her beauteous rival, and notwithstanding his already audacious disposition, addressed him in the following words:—"I conjure thee by all the ties of maternal love, by thine arrow's honied point, and by thy torch's genial warmth, revenge, aye, and with filial reverence inflict an overflowing meed of vengeance for thy parent's injury. One thing above all I implore of thee to do, and do willingly. Punish the contumacious beauty. Inspire her heart with ardent love of a mortal of mean condition, a wretch whom Fortune hath stripped of health and patrimony, a miserable grovelling outcast whose character Fame hath blasted, a being such as the universal world, within its wide expanse, hath not his fellow."

After Venus had said the above words, and kissed Cupid long and tenderly, she hied her to the nearest shores of the ebbing and flowing sea. And now behold her brushing, with rosy feet, the dew from the top-

most surface of the water, and presently seated on a liquid mountain of the profound ocean, whither the powers of the deep, anticipating her half engendered wish, and obedient to her call, as if it were a command of long ago, arrive to do homage. First came the daughters of Nereus singing in chorus, followed by the rough blue-bearded god Neptune, with his spouse, half fish half woman, the full-bosomed Salacia, and their charioteer, the little Palæmon, careering on the back of a dolphin, while in front, astern, and round about, hosts of Tritons furrowed the broad briny waste. Thus did the cortége that waited upon Venus proceed to the palace of Oceanus, while one with a sonorous shell sounded a pleasing melody, another shaded his mistress from the noxious effects of the sun's burning rays with a silken mantle, a third bore a looking-glass, which, to reflect her form, he held aloft before her eyes, and the remainder dived in sport beneath her two-yoked car.

Psyche, despite of her matchless loveliness, reaped not the mortal fruit of her beauty. Eulogised beyond measure, and gazed at unceasingly, no suitor notwithstanding, either royal, noble, or plebeian, came to claim her hand in marriage. For her beauty was rather regarded as of a divine nature, or as the polished marble of a sculptor's statue. But her elder sisters, whose more moderate charms fame had not so spread abroad among people and nations, long since had kings for their husbands and were happily wedded. Thus the deserted Psyche, sick at heart, and faint in body, sat

at home pining in widowed virginity, and,—lamenting those very allurements that fascinated all the world beside,—lived hateful to herself.

And now the wretched father of a still more unhappy daughter, suspicious of the enmity of the Celestials, and dreading their anger, forthwith betook himself to Miletus to consult the most ancient oracle of Apollo, and there, conciliating their wrath with prayers and by the sacrifice of victims, he besought of the great divinity a spouse for the melancholy virgin. Whereupon Apollo gave a reply accordingly, which, though by right of his son who built Miletus, he was properly a Greek and Ionian, was delivered nevertheless in the Latin language, to the following effect:—

"With funeral pomp along the mountain's side
Bid the procession move: there leave the bride,
The tender Psyche, sad devoted maid,
On yonder rock in bridal dress array'd.
Nor hope a bridegroom mortal like thyself;
But eke a wicked, cruel, viprous elf,
Who terrifies the gods with flames, and darts
That penetrate and wound immortal hearts,
Who o'er all nature bears puissant sway,
And wings his course beyond the realms of day,
While at his step each Stygian wave recoils,
And mighty Jove himself shrinks cow'ring in his toils."

The King listened with sorrow to the holy prophetic announcement! His countenance became sad and gloomy; happiness and joy fled from his heart, as with feeble steps and listless gait he wended his way

back to his kingdom, and communicated to the Queen, his spouse, the ominous sentence of the oracle. And now behold, the weeping and mourning within the palace continued several days, till at last, when dire necessity compelled the fulfilment of the divine command, the fatal ceremonial was enacted, and the procession of the deadly nuptials arranged in order. A funeral dirge and bitter lamentations were substituted for the nuptial song; the pipes, instead of a hymeneal strain, sounded a plaintive Lydian melody; and as Psyche wiped the tears from her cheeks with the bridal veil, a black sooty dross overspread the flame of the torches and obscured their light. But Psyche,—though all the citizens commiserated her fate and the fate of her unhappy relatives, and though they had closed the public courts and courts of law in token of their sympathy,—conscious of the necessity of obedience to the celestial mandate, anticipated with courageous resolution her destined ordeal, and bade the procession, accompanied by the entire population of the city, proceed to its destination. Then when the joint solemnities of a marriage and a burial were ready to be impressively performed—when a living being was about to be devoted to the tomb, and Psyche laid, not upon the bridal couch, but upon her bier, and while her parents, overwhelmed with grief at the awful scene, stood aghast and hesitating, the damsel herself addressed to them the following exhortation:—

"Why do ye weep thus continually? Why thus

torment your old age? Why waste your breath, more dear to me than mine own, with repeated cries? Why tear your white hair? Why beat your revered bosoms? Why let vain hopeless tears deform your venerable cheeks? Why cast upon me those heart-breaking thrilling looks? Are such demonstrations the reward of my egregious beauty? Too late, alas! now do ye perceive yourselves stricken by the deadly shaft of envy. Long, long ago, when the people and nations were paying me divine honours, and calling me the new born Venus, should ye have wept and lamented. The name of Venus, full surely I see and feel, hath brought me to perish. Away, then, to the rock! To the spot where fate ordains, thither lead me! Haste, haste! I say, to my auspicious nuptials. Away to my noble bridegroom! Wherefore should I decline to meet a spouse born not only for mine but for all the world's destruction?"

When Psyche had pronounced the above words, she took her place in the procession, and with firm, unfaltering step proceeded among the ranks of the vast population to the appointed lofty rock on the mountain, where, upon its topmost summit, the multitude, extinguishing the lighted torches with their tears, abandoned the devoted damsel, and left her alone. Then, the ceremony at an end, the people, reclining their heads on their bosoms, returned to their homes, and the wretched parents, overcome by grief and weariness, closed the windows and doors of their palace, and aban-

doned themselves to darkness and despair. Scarcely, however, had they departed, when, as Psyche, timid and solitary, lay weeping and trembling on the verge of the rock, the mild breath of Zephyr blowed a gentle breeze, that inspired with a tremulous motion her inflated garments, and, tenderly lifting her adown the mountain height, laid her on the flowery lap of the valley below.

BOOK V.

Continuation of Fifth Episode.—*Cupid and Psyche.*

Psyche, reclining on a bed of dewy grass, and delighted by the fragrance of the soft tender herbage, was relieved from her agitation of mind by a sound sweet sleep, from which she presently awoke refreshed both in body and spirit. Immediately on awaking she saw before her a grove of large very tall trees, and in the midst of the grove was a fountain whose waters were clear as crystal. A little way from the fountain stood a palace—a palace not formed by human hands, but reared by skill divine, such, reader, as, hadst thou entered it, thou wouldst at once have pronounced the beautiful and charming abode of some deity. The lofty ceilings, supported by golden columns, were curiously wrought with citron wood and ivory, and the walls that met the eye of the spectator coming within were encrusted with silver, whereon, in bass relief, or chased engraving, were wild beasts and various domestic cattle, represented with such subtle perfection of art, that nought but a god, or a demigod, or man inspired by a miracle, could have imagined the numberless variety of ferine forms moulded from the precious metal. The pavements also were ornamented

with an infinite diversity of pictures in mosaic, composed of precious stones; and happy, oh happy, were the possessors of similar treasures, could they, as here, always trample their splendid gems and necklaces under their feet.

The rest of this spacious extensive palace was alike precious beyond measure, and the walls of the chambers, of the portico, nay, even of the very baths, were so covered with glittering masses of gold, that the objects shone, as it were, in defiance of the sun, by the light of their own created day. Truly, so abundantly divine and boundless was the wealth displayed everywhere, that one might have imagined great Jove himself were the fabricator of a domicile to commune with the children of men.

Psyche, overcome with delight and wonder at the sight of such a lovely locality, began to advance a little nearer to the building, and gaining confidence by little and little, and by slow degrees, at last ventured to overstep the threshold. Impelled by irresistible curiosity and fascinated by the charming spectacle, she gazed, and admired, and examined all she saw before her, beholding, with infinite astonishment, the heaps of untold treasure, treasure of every sort, that lay strewed on the ground all the way she went, as she wandered to the nethermost portion of the apartments of the divine architect. In fact, there exists nothing valuable under the sun that was not there. But while she continued to admire such indescribable riches, the riches, as it

were, of the universal world all lying together, one circumstance surprised her and wrapped her mind in wonder more than every thing. There was no guard, animate nor inanimate; neither man, nor chain, nor lock, nor bar, nor bolt, nor defence of any kind whatever. And now, while the wondering and delighted damsel stood lost in mute amazement at the scene before her, her attention was suddenly arrested by the sound of a human voice, which, as a creature divested of bodily form, thus addressed her:—

"Why, mistress, art thou surprised? All the wealth thou seest before thee is thine own. Lo, yonder is thy bedchamber; hie thee thither; refresh thy limbs with rest, and when thou art willing, call for thy bath, and we, thine handmaidens, whose voices thou now hearest, will wait upon thee diligently, and dress thee, and prepare thee a royal banquet speedily."

Psyche felt inspired by the blessing of Divine Providence, and, obedient to the insubstantial voices that she heard, first invoked the aid of sleep to relieve her fatigue, and was afterwards refreshed by a bath. When she had bathed and dressed, she proceeded to the chamber adjoining, where, at the farther end of the room, was a hemicycle, and within the hemicycle a table laid out with all the utensils appropriate for a banquet. Perceiving the preparations were intended especially for herself, she reclined upon an elevated couch close to the table, where no sooner had she placed herself, than simultaneously abundance of dainty dishes and necta-

rean wines in copious variety appeared before her eyes, and, as it were, impelled by spiritual impulse, without the aid of human hands, were laid upon the table. Neither was a single human being to be seen. Her servants, whose words were heard continually falling from invisible lips, were only voices. The banquet was delicious. After it was over, a man's voice sang of its own accord, while a musician, alike invisible, played an accompaniment upon the harp with masculine energy. Then the modulated harmony of a multitude of voices sounded in her ears, and though no human being, neither man nor woman, was to be seen, completed a full chorus.

At last the enchanting music ceased, and the evening having already far advanced, Psyche had retired to rest, when, at the dead of night, a gentle murmuring sound fell upon her ears, and not only terrified her the more because she was all alone in the dark and could see nothing at all, but because people ignorant of the object of their fear are invariably the most alarmed. Before the dawn of day, the invisible spouse of Psyche had left her and fled far away, and the voices as before came to render homage to their mistress and hail the new made bride.

Novelty, as usual under similar circumstances, was now the joy of her life, and the sound of the invisible voices the solace of her solitude. Her parents, meanwhile, bowed down by age and excessive grief, confined themselves to their palace, whither her elder

sisters, hearing of her disappearance from the rock, and leaving their homes with anxious dismal countenances, respectively betook themselves with the utmost haste and eagerness, to visit and consult them. On the night of that eventful day did the invisible husband of Psyche thus address her:

"Dearest wife, sweetest, sweetest Psyche, fortune hath a grievous peril in store which it behoves thee most vigilantly to guard against. The report of thy death hath reached the ears of thy sisters, and speedily will they repair to the rock whence I brought thee to seek tidings of thy fate. If therefore the sound of lamentations coming from that quarter strike upon thine ears, give no reply,—no, nor even dare to bend thine eyes towards the spot. Fail not to do as I warn thee; if thou dost otherwise, 'twill bring a grievous sorrow upon me and be destruction to thyself."

Psyche immediately promised to do all he required; but when the night had passed away, and he had disappeared as usual, she wasted the whole of the ensuing day in tears, lamenting to herself over and over again her bereavement from human conversation, and commiserating the grief of her sisters whom she herself was unable to help, and, a prisoner though in a splendid palace, was forbidden to see. Finally she would neither eat, nor bathe, nor amuse herself at all, but the whole entire day she did nothing but cry, cried on till night, cried herself to sleep, and even after she was asleep still continued to cry till she was

awakened by her husband, who, that particular night, happened to come by chance earlier than usual. Then did her husband tenderly embrace her, and expostulate as follows:—

"Is this the way, Psyche, of performing thy promise? Is this what I, thy husband, have to expect from thee? Wilt thou never cease, neither by day nor by night, to torment thyself and sadden even the very hours when I am with thee? Nay, do then as thou wilt; follow the baneful dictates of thy inclination. Albeit remember what now I tell thee—full soon, alas! wilt thou repent, and then too late, the serious admonition I gave thee."

Psyche nevertheless persisted in her supplications in spite of the above remonstrances, till, by violent entreaties and actually threatening to put an end to her life in case of a refusal, she extorted her husband's compliance to her wishes, and not only obtained his consent to see her sisters, and do all in her power to soothe their sorrow, but gained permission to make them as many handsome presents of golden ornaments and necklaces as she thought proper. But he strictly enjoined her—and repeated the injunction often, till he made her tremble—to keep the invisibility of his form a profound secret, lest, by yielding to a sacrilegious curiosity, she might voluntarily cast herself from the pinnacle of her present good fortune, and be torn from his embraces for ever.

Psyche had no sooner expressed her grateful thanks

than her heart recovered its buoyancy. "Sweetest husband," said she, "an hundred deaths would I die rather than part from thee. More dear to me art thou than my life; nay, whoever thou art, even wert thou Cupid's self, not more tenderly could I love thee. Yet one thing more, I beseech thee, grant me, dear, dear spouse, sweet soul of thy Psyche. Bid Zephyr, thy servant who bore me to thee, bring hither also my sisters in the same airy vehicle."

To the latter request her husband, overcome with tenderness, consented unwillingly, and after promising to comply with everything she demanded, vanished from her arms before daybreak.

Meanwhile the sisters of Psyche made all possible haste to ascend the mountain and reach that part of the rock where she had been left alone. There they wept and lamented, and beat their bosoms, and called aloud to their lost sister by her proper name, till the continuous sound of their wailings, echoed and re-echoed by the surrounding crags and cliffs, penetrated through downward space to the valley below and fell on the ears of Psyche.

Psyche, at the well known sound of her sisters' voices, trembled violently, and running out of the palace in a state of delirious agitation, "Whence these doleful lamentations?" exclaimed she, "why thus needlessly afflict yourselves? Here, here am I whom ye mourn. Cease then the dismal sounds; for now at last ye may embrace her for whom those tears have flowed so long and incessantly."

No sooner had she thus expressed herself than, according to her husband's directions, Psyche summoned Zephyr to her presence, and giving him his orders, Zephyr submitted willingly to her authority, and without a moment's delay, a gentle breeze lifted her sisters from the rock, and wafted them safely to the valley.

Many now were the moments passed in mutual endearments which were continued till tears, repressed for a considerable period, burst forth anew from joy. At length said Psyche, "Come now, my sisters; cheer up your afflicted spirits, and recreate yourselves awhile within our dwelling." Then, without more ado, she led them into her golden house, showed them the vast treasures it contained, and allowed them to hear the voices of her numerous obedient family of servants. Then she conducted them to a most beautiful bath, and refreshed them by the delicacies of a divine banquet, till, satiated with copious abundance of celestial viands, envy was generated in the lowest depths of their bosoms, and one especially inquisitively inquiring particulars of her husband, the lord and master of such boundless wealth, demanded incessantly what manner of man he was, who, and whence he came. But Psyche, mindful of his injunctions, refrained from violating her promise, and preserved the secret of her bosom; but, feigning a tale for the occasion, said he was young and handsome, a youth who passed his time among the mountains in rural occupations and hunting,

and whose cheeks were newly shadowed by a beard like the fleece of a new born lamb. Then, fearing lest she might further betray her trust in case the conversation were protracted, she once more summoned Zephyr to her presence, and presenting her sisters with a copious variety of jewels, necklaces, and golden ornaments, bade him transport them back again to the rock whence they came.

No sooner was the command given than it was executed, and these two ungrateful sisters, whose hearts were burning with envy more and more, thus conversed together as they returned towards their homes. One, after a considerable period of silence, began by saying to the other, "Oh wicked, cruel Fortune! truly indeed do people say that thou art blind! Sister, canst thou bear that we, the eldest, sustain a destiny so different from hers, and yet are born of the same parents as herself? Shall we, married to foreign husbands, their servants rather than their wives, live abroad in a strange country far away from our parents, while our youngest sister has a god for her husband, and enjoys such boundless wealth that she knows not how to make use of what she hath? Didst thou not see, sister, the number and beauty of the necklaces lying every where about the house?—the splendid dresses, the brilliant jewels, and the ornaments of gold that, wherever we went, we trod under our feet? Truly if her husband be handsome as she describes him, no happier creature is there in the whole wide world than she. Aye,

and this husband-god of hers, so soon as continued acquaintance and conversation strengthen his affection, may peradventure transform her into a goddess. A goddess! By Hercules, and so, according to her lofty bearing, she already fancies herself; for needs must the woman who hath unearthly voices for her attendants, and can command the very winds, breathe the immortal aspirations of a goddess. But, woe is me! I am wedded to a husband who, in age older than my father, and in size a dwarf not taller than a boy, with a head as bald as a pumpkin, keeps the house close fastened with bolts and chains all the day long."

"Well, sister, mayst thou say what thou hast said," replied the other, "though, for my part, my lot is no better than thine. My husband, forsooth, is bent double with age, and the gout hath so crippled his joints that my duties rather than the duties of a wife are those of a laborious nurse, to rub his crooked fingers indurated with chalk-stones, and scald these delicate hands with nasty fomentations and cataplasms. But 'tis thou thyself, sister, not I, who submits to all these indignities with a patient, aye, and,—suffer me to speak out freely and say what I think,—a servile spirit. I, forsooth, bear to sustain so different a destiny! Why it tortures me even to think of good fortune so unworthily bestowed, and I can sustain it no longer. Bethink thee of the haughtiness and arrogance of her behaviour, how ostentatiously she boasted of her wealth, and how she betrayed her pride of heart

in every gesture. Then the trifling things she selected for us out of her incalculable treasure, how ungraciously she tossed, as it were, the articles into our laps, and how, getting speedily tired of us, we were propelled, or puffed, or hissed away. But, as I hope to live and am a woman, I'll knock her off her lofty perch ere long—aye, upset her from the pinnacle of all these riches. As for thee, if thou canst feel as 'tis meet thou should, the contumely offered to thy sister, why thou wilt join thy force to mine in valid counsel, and we will cooperate together. Meanwhile let us not show the jewels we carry with us to any human being, no, not even to our parents; neither let us appear to know that our sister is alive; for truly we who have witnessed a spectacle sufficiently grievous to ourselves, will not be the heralds of her good fortune. On the contrary she shall know that riches, apart from the cognizance of the world, yield not happiness to the possessor; aye, and shall feel, moreover, that as well as incorporeal handmaidens, she hath also elder sisters. But now let us away to our husbands, and there, when we resume our conversation, in our own poor quiet dwellings, and have time for cool reflection, we shall be better provided with a plan for humbling her pride than at present."

Such were the wicked purposes designed by these two bad women and applauded by their evil nature. Accordingly, concealing all the valuable presents they had received, they went first to their parents, where,

tearing their hair and beating their faces, as in truth they richly deserved in good earnest, they pretended to weep and bewail the loss of their sister, and feigned the appearance of real grief so well that the wounded hearts of the poor old people were burst open afresh, and all their recent unhappiness was renewed as keen as ever. But no sooner had they thus been the cause of all this sorrow to the aged pair than, bloated with malicious rage, they deserted them in a hurry, and plotting insidious, aye murderous schemes against their guiltless sister, they hastened to their homes.

Thus were circumstances proceeding in the dwellings of the elder sisters, when, at one of the nocturnal conferences of Psyche with her unknown husband, he addressed her in terms of admonition as follows:—

"Behold how the skirmishers of thy evil fortune are already advancing towards thee! Alas! how great the danger, that, unless avoided by firmness and extreme precaution, will confront thee hand to hand! Already are the perfidious she wolves at their endeavours to ensnare thee by various artifices; already have they the desire to persuade thee to view my countenance, which, if only once and for a moment thou dost behold, never, oh never, wilt thou see again. When, therefore, the mischievous vampires actually come,—for they will come again, fraught with noxious schemes, full well I know,—hold thou no converse with them, I charge thee. But, even shouldst thou yield thus far through thy natural simplicity of dispo-

sition and tenderness of heart, then do I at all events enjoin thee not to hear or say a single word relating to thy husband. . . . . And yet there is one thing more I needs must tell thee. Young as thou art, ere long thou wilt bear an infant, which, if thou preserve our secret in silence, will be born DIVINE; if thou profane our secret,—MORTAL."

Psyche was delighted and consoled at this intelligence. Her eyes sparkled with pleasure. Already, in anticipation of a divine offspring, the pledge of future glory, she rejoiced in maternal dignity, and, anxiously reckoning the intervening months and days, contemplated the coming event in childish ignorance.

Meanwhile her sisters, those nefarious, pestilential Furies, exhaling the poison of vipers from their lips, hastened with impious celerity on board ship, and set sail to the palace of Psyche, who in due time previously was again put on her guard by her husband in one of their nightly conversations. And thus during his temporary, fleeting visit did he address her:—

"The day of trial hath arrived; the bitter calamity soon will press upon thee. Thine own sex and thine own blood are in arms against thee. The enemy have struck their camp, have sounded the trumpet, are on their march towards thee. The hands of thy sisters direct the sword's point at thy throat. Alas, darling Psyche! by what dangers are we surrounded! Take pity on thyself! Have pity upon me, and preserve steadfast religious silence. Save thy husband, save

thyself, save our infant offspring from impending destruction. Neither see nor listen to a word from thy sisters, I implore thee. Sisters? No! those profligate women, after the deadly hatred they have shown thee, after trampling under foot the ties of kindred, are no longer thy sisters. Listen to them not, I say. No! though like syrens they utter their cries from the rock till the surrounding heights ring with the sound of their lamentations."

Psyche, while tears and sobs choked her utterance, notwithstanding the above address of her spouse, replied in broken sentences as follows:—"Have not I given thee already proof of my fidelity? Dost thou not know I can keep thy secret? Wherefore, then, shouldst thou fear to test e'en now once again my firmness and constancy? Once more, then, I beseech thee, give thy orders to Zephyr; once more let Zephyr fulfil his duty; once more let me see my sisters. Recreate the heart of thy Psyche with one, only one more interview. I implore thee by those locks that, fragrant with perfume, hang about thy neck; by thy cheeks, tender and smooth as my own; by thy bosom glowing, if not with immortal fire, with warmth incomprehensible. Grant me, then, oh grant me the boon I ask, and let Psyche, thy dear devoted Psyche, embrace her sisters for the last time. The sight of thine own revered countenance is, alas! denied her—that countenance which, one day at least, in the face of a darling infant will she surely behold. Then, then

indeed, will she truly see thee, thee that art even now the light of her eyes in this nocturnal darkness."

The husband of Psyche, overcome and enchanted by her fascinating endearments, granted the utmost of her request, and, anticipating the light of the coming dawn, brushed the tears from her eyes with his curly locks, and fled away.

Meanwhile her sisters, linked together, as it were, in the yoke of sisterly conspiracy, left their homes once more in precipitate haste, without even giving their parents notice of their departure. So soon as their ship approached the shore, they hurried from the vessel to the rock. Thence, with the ungovernable rashness of over confidence, they flung themselves at once headlong over the precipice, without awaiting for a moment the presence of the buoyant breeze; but Zephyr, ever mindful of the divine mandate, supported them on a passing puff of air, and, though unwillingly, laid them on the ground in safety. With rapid steps, and without a moment's delay, they went to the palace of Psyche, whom, with joyful countenances that concealed a world of treachery, they embraced earnestly; while one, simulating a sister's tenderness, thus addressed their victim:—"Oh, Psyche! how inexpressible is the delight thou hast in store for us! For truly by thy altered appearance do I perceive thou art about to become a mother. What infinite joy and happiness wilt thou confer on thy whole family! How delighted shall we be to nurse the charming dear baby, which, if it be like

its parents, and so no doubt it will be, will surely be as beautiful as a little Cupid!"

In this manner they continued for some time, by a false display of affection, to gain the heart of their sister more and more, while she, after they had been seated for a while, and had recovered a little from their fatigue, ordered, as before, baths with heated water to be prepared, also splendid couches to recline on after bathing; and, lastly, a banquet composed of innumerable exquisite delicacies to be laid before them. When the banquet was over, Psyche commanded her invisible attendants to sound the harp, and a harp was immediately sounded,—to play on the pipe, and a pipe was played,—to sing in concert, and the air resounded with the melody of a host of harmonious voices that soothed the hearts of the hearers with the most enchanting music, though not a creature was to be seen. But neither had the harmony of the voices nor of the instrumental music sufficient power of fascination to soften the hard hearts of those two sorceresses, or bend their minds from their preconcerted scheme. Accordingly they began immediately to lead her towards the snare by turning the conversation to the subject of her husband, and treacherously to make inquiries about his parentage and condition. Psyche meanwhile, through the extreme simplicity of her nature, forgetful of the account she had given before, and inventing an entirely new story for the occasion, now replied, in answer to the interrogations of her sisters, that her husband was a

native of the adjoining province, a person of middle age, whose hair was beginning to be sprinkled with gray. She added that he was a merchant engaged in very large commercial transactions. Having so said, unwilling, as in the former instance, to dwell longer on the conversation, she now loaded her sisters with splendid presents, and consigned them to their windy vehicle.

While, borne aloft and propelled by Zephyr's gentle breath, they were steadily floating towards their homes, the following conversation passed between them:

"The silly creature!" exclaimed one, "didst thou not perceive, sister, the monstrous lie she told us? First, said she, 'he is a young man with a soft downy beard just beginning to grow;' and now, forsooth, he hath become of middle age, with a few glittering silver hairs among his locks. Why, what manner of man can her husband be, thus to have grown old on a sudden? Depend on it, she has either invented the lie or has never seen him. No matter, we must, in the first place, utterly deprive her of her riches as soon as possible, whichever be the truth—although, forsooth, if indeed she hath never seen her husband, she hath surely wedded a god, and a god will be her offspring, which heaven forbid! Nay, were a divine infant to be born of her, I should hang myself most assuredly the moment it saw daylight. But for the present we will go home to our parents, and there consider farther what had better be done on the subject we talked of before."

Thus did the sisters continue to converse together until they arrived at the dwelling of their early home, when they were wrought to such a pitch of angry fury, that they would scarcely deign to look at their parents; and after they went to rest, they lay tumbling and tossing all night in bed till morning. So soon as it was dawn of day they arose immediately, and setting forth by a similar voyage as before, back again to the rock, they threw themselves once more off the precipice, and once more, by the kindly aid of Zephyr, though rather roughly handled on the descent by a violent blast of wind, were deposited safely on the ground.

Thence again they hastened to Psyche's habitation, and having arrived there, and, by violent pressure of their eyelids, squeezed out a few deceitful tears, one thus addressed her:—"Oh, Psyche, what a happy blessed state of ignorance art thou in! How tranquilly, forsooth, dost thou sit here at thy home, unaware of thy danger, while we, thy vigilant guardians, anxious in everything that concerns thee, are in terror at thy perilous predicament! We have heard then for a truth—and as 'tis our duty to be thy partners in sorrow and misfortune, we durst not conceal it from thee—that thou art wedded to nothing more nor less than a great serpent, a hideous, many-folded, gaping-mouthed monster, with crest dripping noxious poison, that crawls to bed to thee every night. Recall to thy mind for a moment, I beseech thee, the oracle of the Pythian Apollo, who promised and foretold thee a

cruel viperous creature for thy bridegroom; and observe, moreover, that 'tis no wild fancy of our own that I relate, for the hunters and husbandmen in the vicinity have actually seen the serpent I tell thee of, every evening swimming across the shoals of the adjacent river, after his feeding-time. Neither is it for nought, say they, thou art nourished here so sumptuously, nor for other purpose than to make thee a more dainty morsel for thy monster husband, who, so soon as thou art properly plump and fat, will certainly devour thee. With thyself, then, rests the choice at present, whether to believe what we, thy sisters, now tell thee, and preserve thy life by living with us, free from all manner of danger, or whether you prefer to be buried deep in the bowels of a truculent monster. So if the charms of vocal solitude in this beautiful valley, and the fascinating allurements of a horrible venomous serpent, incline thee to remain where thou art, at least we, thy loving sisters, will have done our duty towards thee."

The simple-minded, tender-hearted, unhappy Psyche was altogether overwhelmed with fear at this shocking recital; and being for the moment bereft of her senses, forgot all her husband's admonitions and her own promises, and precipitated herself at once into the lowest abyss of misfortune. Accordingly the blood fled from her cheeks, her face was overspread with a livid paleness, and she trembled violently, while she thus addressed her sisters, in a voice half extinct from want of

breath, and incapable of uttering three words consecutively: "Dearest sisters," said she, "I know you have acted towards me as you ought, and have done no more than perform a pious duty; neither, methinks, are the people who have related the story altogether the inventors of a falsehood. To confess the truth, never have I yet, even for a moment, seen the face of my husband, nor do I know his family. I hear, indeed, the sound of his voice, when he talks to me at night in an undertone; but I am obliged to bear with his fancies, and, for everything else that relates to him, am in a state of ignorance. This I know too truly, that he has a terrible aversion to daylight, and rejoices in darkness. For every morning, before early dawn, he flies away from me. He may indeed, if not actually the creature you describe, be at least a winged animal. Besides, he has strictly warned me—nay, terrified me—from the thought of ever beholding his countenance, which if I ever do cast my eyes upon, some dire calamity, he said, will surely befal me. Desert not your sister, then, in the present crisis, but, lest all your former vigilance be rendered useless by an unseasonable act of negligence, render all the assistance in your power to extricate her from danger."

When Psyche had done speaking, the two wicked women, perceiving they had made a breach in her heart, and that her inmost thoughts lay naked and exposed, treacherously sallied forth, as it were, from their ambuscade, and drawing the sword of deceit

from the scabbard, assailed her simple, wavering mind. Then, accordingly, one addressed her as follows:—

'Since, under the present emergency, when thy life is at stake, the bonds of kindred compel us to have no regard to our own peril, I will explain to thee a manner of acting, which, as both of us have reflected on it long and maturely, we think the only possible mode of securing thy safety. Provide thyself with a knife, sharp as a razor,—which 'twere better, in order to render the edge still more acute, to pass along the palm of thy hand,—and also with a lamp, well trimmed, full of oil, and a shade covering the bright light of the flame. Conceal both the knife and the lamp under thy bed, on the side where thou art accustomed to lie, until the serpent hath entered the apartment, glided into bed as usual, and stretching himself out at length, hath begun to breathe audibly, under the impulse of the first sound sleep. Delay not then for an instant to slide out of bed, and on bare feet and tip-toe, with a soft, gentle step, go, free the lamp from its hiding-place in the dark, and, with its light to help thee to execute thy noble purpose, courageously elevate thy right hand, and, with as vigorous an effort as thy strength can command, divide the noxious serpent's vertebræ at the nape of his neck, and completely cut off his head. Fear not that we shall leave thee alone without assistance in thy enterprise; for the moment thou hast killed the serpent, and secured thine own safety, we will speedily be with thee, help thee to

remove thy treasure, and wed thee to another mortal, human creature, like thyself."

When the sisters of Psyche had wrought upon and inflamed her mind to a sufficient pitch of determination, they deserted her immediately, for they were afraid to be present during the perpetration of the deed they themselves had suggested, notwithstanding the promise they had given to remain on the spot and render their assistance. Accordingly, confiding themselves as usual to the wings of the wind, they were conveyed aloft and laid upon the rock, whence they hurried with impetuous haste on foot to the sea-shore, and sailed homewards in their vessel. Meanwhile Psyche being now by herself and solitary, if one whose heart is agitated by the cruel furies can be said to be alone, was tormented by a host of conflicting passions, and her bosom heaved like the surface of the ocean. Though her design was fixed, and her mind resolute, yet so soon as she began to think in earnest of what she was going to do, she shrunk appalled by her unhappy fate, and was distracted by doubt and hesitation. Hurrying and procrastinating by turns, at one moment rash, at another tremulous, sometimes diffident, sometimes irascible, there was one pervading sentiment notwithstanding, that continually regulated her heart. In spite of the bitter hatred she felt towards the beast, she persisted to love the husband.

At last night arrived, and Psyche having already prepared all the necessary apparatus, her husband came

as usual. And now he was overwhelmed with sound sleep, when Psyche, whose heart the influence of fate had steeled to the performance of the deed, though at other times feeble in body and infirm in purpose, feeling now her strength invigorated, and her natural feminine weakness replaced by masculine courage, uncovered the lamp and grasped the knife in her hand. But no sooner were the mysteries of the chamber illuminated by the first rays of light, than she beheld the very gentlest and sweetest of all the wild beasts that ever were seen in the world—the beautiful God of Love, Cupid himself—softly, soundly sleeping.

The lamp in her hand, in the presence of the lovely spectacle, shone with exhilarated brightness, and the sacrilegious knife repented the keenness of its edge, while Psyche, astonished at the wondrous vision, dropped on her knees in a fright, and, pale and trembling, had well nigh buried the blade in her own bosom in her eagerness to conceal it, had not the weapon itself leaped voluntarily from the rash hand that held it, in horror of committing the crime. But as she continued to view the divine beauty of Cupid's countenance her faint sick heart became refreshed by degrees, and after a while she gazed with delight on the luxuriant golden hair that, teeming with ambrosial perfume, hung in curls over his forehead and shoulders, and shone with a gloss so brilliant that the dazzled flame of the lamp quivered from the reflection. His cheeks were the colour of the rose, his neck white as

milk, and from the shoulders of the god grew a pair of wings, the tender, delicate, downy points of whose white dewy feathers were tremulously wafted up and down as it were in wanton sport, notwithstanding that the pinions rested in repose upon a body that, transcendantly beautiful and smooth, displayed the loveliness of Venus herself in the person of her offspring.

At last Psyche all of a sudden espied lying at the foot of the bed on the ground a bow and a quiver full of arrows, the auspicious arms of the most powerful of deities, and, seized with admiration and insatiable curiosity to touch her husband's weapons, she drew one of the arrows out of the quiver and began to feel and examine it. Accordingly the point gently pressed upon her thumb, inflicting a tiny puncture from the tremulous movement of the joint, a minute atom of blood, like a dew-drop, started to the surface of the skin, and the simple Psyche, wounded by an arrow of the God of Love, became more enamoured than ever. Overcome by the sense of her good fortune, and infatuated more and more every moment, she leant in excess of tenderness over the rosy deity, trembling and agitated lest she might awake him, till the lamp elevated in her hand, whether from the genuine envious perfidy of its nature, or the desire itself to impress a kiss on an object so beautiful, spirted a drop of scalding oil from the summit of its flame on Cupid's right shoulder.

Oh rash, audacious lamp! love's vile minister, that

surely wert originally invented by some anxious lover longing to renew the day in the presence of his mistress, how couldst thou dare to burn the god of mortal and immortal fire?

Up sprang the scalded deity, and recognising the sad tokens of detected infidelity immediately flew away. In silence would he have left the arms of his wretched wife and gone clean out of sight, but Psyche, seizing him suddenly by the right leg as he arose, ready to accompany him at all hazards through the regions of the air, held on with both her hands, a miserable appendage as it were to his flight, till fatigue compelled her to relinquish her hold, and she fell in despair to the ground. Meanwhile her divine lover, averse to leaving her at once in so abject a position, perched on the topmost branch of a cypress tree close by, and angrily addressed her as follows:—"Oh, simple, simple Psyche, wherefore did I set at nought the precepts of my mother Venus? Wherefore not obey her commands and inspire thee with a base ignoble passion for the lowest, the most degraded being among mortal men? Wherefore did I myself become enamoured and fly to thee as thy lover? Wherefore did I, redoubtable archer as I am, wound myself with my own weapon and make thee my wife? Full well I know I have shown lack of wisdom in giving thee a preference, for which, forsooth, as well as for all other kindly acts I have done for thee, now thou wouldst repay me by believing me to be a serpent, and by taking a knife in thy hand to

cut off my head. Aye, the very head whose eyes have so doated on thee. Fain would I have warned thee against this calamity by the admonitions I gave thee, and even now will I inflict upon thee no severer punishment than to fly away and leave thee. But speedily shall thy two wicked counsellors feel the weight of my vengeance."

Cupid, so soon as he had said the above words, threw himself into the air upon his pinions, and first mounting aloft, darted straight away, while Psyche, prostrate on the ground, watched the course of his flight and kept him in view as long as she was able. But when the rapid movement of his wings through the immensity of space had alienated him from her sight, she rose hastily on her feet, and in the deep affliction of her heart, pouring forth the most bitter lamentations, rushed recklessly to an adjacent river, and precipitated herself from the bank into the water. The gentle river, in honour and in fear of the god of Love, whose fiery influence scorched even the nymphs of the stream and the denizens of its waters, wafted her buoyantly towards the shore, and one of its obedient waves tossed her unhurt and safe upon a tuft of green grass.

Close to the spot where she lay the rustic Pan was by chance amorously reclining beside the goddess Canna, instructing her to modulate innumerable pleasing melodies on vocal reeds. The goat-legged deity, cognizant of the misfortune of the fainting heart-stricken Psyche, kindly beckoned her to the spot, where,—surrounded by

a flock of sportive goats wandering here and there at pasture, and clipping as it were the river's locks,—he sat resting on its brow, and thus addressed her in the following consolatory words: "Notwithstanding I am a countryman and a shepherd, pretty damsel, I am come to a good old age, and have had much experience under various different circumstances; wherefore if I rightly conjecture, and the conjectures of prudent men many people call the faculty of divination,—if I rightly conjecture I say, and if I were to judge by thy tottering and more frequently irresolute steps, by the excessive paleness of thy countenance, and, above all things, by the sad expression of thine eyes—thou art in love most desperately. I pray thee then listen attentively while I give thee some wholesome advice. Think not to throw thyself off a precipice, nor to accomplish thy own destruction by any means whatsoever, but cast away thy sorrow, cheer up thy heart, and offer up thy fervent prayers to Cupid, the most potent of all the deities, who forsooth, delicate, spoilt stripling as he is, must be coaxed and flattered mightily."

When the shepherd god had ceased to speak, Psyche made no reply, but simply doing homage to the propitious divinity, passed forward on her way. She had gone only a little distance after her departure, when, as she was walking along with toilsome steps, she came to a path leading out of the road in a direction she knew not whither; and having by this time completely lost her way, she followed the path and continued to

proceed till it brought her to a certain city. Now this city happened to be immediately within the verge of the dominions of the king who was the husband of one of her sisters, and the place where they lived; upon which Psyche, so soon as she became cognizant of the circumstance, immediately sent a message to her sister to announce her arrival. Accordingly she was speedily introduced into her sister's presence, and after they had mutually embraced each other, and the forms of salutation were over, her sister asked her what was the cause that had brought her thither, and Psyche, in answer to the interrogative, replied as follows:—"You surely cannot have so soon forgotten the advice you gave me,—nay, the trouble you took to persuade me to take a knife and kill my husband, who, you said, was a beast in disguise; a monster that would one day or other engulph me in his voracious gullet? Well, I did as we had agreed between us. But when the first glare of light discovered to me his countenance, I beheld a truly wonderful and divine spectacle. Divine I say. Cupid, Venus's own son, fast and sound asleep. Astonished at the sight of such good fortune, and so over-delighted at the prospect of happiness that I knew not what I did, a drop of boiling oil fell out of the lamp and, by the very worst of all possible bad luck, dropped upon his shoulder. The pain instantly awoke him; so, starting up accordingly, and seeing me standing with the knife in one hand and the lamp in the other—'Away with thee instantly,' said he, 'I

divorce thee from my bed for ever. Yet, notwithstanding the horrible crime thou hast committed, take with thee what is thine own, and I will marry thy sister' (thee it was that by name he mentioned particularly), 'and forthwith have the nuptials celebrated.' When he had thus said he immediately summoned Zephyr to his presence, and commanded him to bid a gale of wind bear me beyond the precincts of the palace."

When Psyche had finished the above fictitious narrative, and thus had retaliated for the injury sustained from her sister, the latter became violently agitated. Roused to furious excitement by the noxious stings of envy and avarice, she invented a story forthwith to deceive the king her husband, saying she had received the news of the death of one of her parents, and set sail without more ado on her way to the palace of Cupid. Hurrying from the ship to the rock with the utmost haste, she made a violent leap over the precipice, notwithstanding at the time there was blowing a wind over which Zephyr had no control. "Oh, Cupid!" exclaimed she, gasping with vain hope as she sprang from the giddy height, "receive thy worthy wife, and Zephyr, do thou acknowledge her thy mistress." Fate treating her as she deserved, ordained it otherwise, and she perished miserably. Neither alive nor dead did she reach the goal of her ambition. Her limbs lay scattered here and there among the crags of the rocks; vultures and the wild beasts of the mountains preyed on her lacerated bowels.

And now after one of the wicked sisters had breathed her last, vengeance was not slow to overtake the other. When the former left the city of her domicile Psyche departed also, and continuing her wandering course, arrived in a few days at another city, where in like manner the other sister was residing with the king, her husband, in his dominions. The other sister, in like manner with the first, having interrogated Psyche, and Psyche having led her also into the snare by the same inveigling reply, she, following the other's example, and emulous of becoming the spouse of Cupid and supplanting her younger sister, hurried immediately to the rock as the other had done, and there met a similar fate.

While the forlorn Psyche was wandering all over the country, thinking of nothing at all in the world than how and where to find her husband, and seeking him wherever she went, Cupid lay groaning on his mother's own bed severely scalded by the boiling oil of the lamp. A snow white seagull, the bird that as it floats on the waves of the sea flaps its wings upon the water, carried the intelligence to Venus, and plunging down precipitately, approached her just as she had gone to bathe, and was swimming on the surface of the ocean. "Thy son," said the bird, "is suffering grievously from a wound that fire hath inflicted; his life is in danger. Disgrace too hath fallen on thy family, and rumours are abroad, and in the mouths of all the people. They say, forsooth, that he hath been paying court to a damsel in

the mountains, while thou wert away. While thou art amusing thyself here swimming in the sea, all the world is in confusion during thy absence. Pleasure, Ease, and Elegance have fled at thy departure; mortals have grown rude, rustic, and slovenly; the social and conjugal ties of love and affection are at an end; parents cast chilling glances even on their own children; men's hearts are swayed by a sordid host of uncongenial impulses. In short, the earth is nought but a bleak desert waste without thee."

Such were the words derogatory to the character of the Queen of Love and her son, that the meddling loquacious bird chattered in the ear of Venus; whereat she was enraged exceedingly, and immediately replied as follows:—"Say'st thou that that good son of mine hath gotten himself a mistress? Tell me then, Oh tell me, I pray thee, thou who in bringing the news hast rendered me a loving service, what is her name who hath enticed my ingenuous beardless boy? Is it one of the band of Nymphs, or of the number of Hours, or of the choir of Muses, or is it, peradventure, one of the Graces that belong to mine own household?"

"Really, my mistress," replied the bird, "I cannot tell thee; but,"—unable to preserve silence owing to its extraordinarily talkative disposition, it continued, —"I think if I remember right, the damsel, whom he loves to distraction, is called Psyche."

"Psyche?" exclaimed Venus with indignation, "the same ambitious wench who hath taken my name and

usurped my beauty? Aye, and forsooth may think me a go-between, who brought him designedly into her presence?" So saying, without a moment's delay, she emerged from the sea, and transporting herself to her golden chamber with infinite rapidity, found her wounded boy lying there sick in bed as had been told her.

Unable to contain her passion, before she passed the threshold of the door, she exclaimed, in an elevated voice,—"Pretty pranks of thine, truly! Marvellously fitting to thy birth and character! First, disobey the commands of thy mother, who hath authority over thee! Aye, neglect to torment her enemy with the pains of a sordid attachment! And next, thou profligate, half-grown stripling, take to wife thyself, and give me for a daughter-in-law, the creature whom I detest most of all other women in the world! But, conceited fop, odious seducer, dost thou think thyself my only noble son? aye, forsooth, and consider me too old to have another like thee? But I will have another son in spite of thee, I'd have thee to know; nay, a better son than thou art. I will adopt the son of one of my handmaidens; and, the more to vex thee, I will give him thy wings, and thy torch, and thy bow, and every one of those arrows of thine that thou hast misused so scandalously. For none of thy equipment dost thou inherit from thy father; but thy accoutrements, and all thou hast, belong to me. Even from thy very childhood, wicked

boy as thou art, hast thou had thine hands full of mischief,—continually shooting thy darts at thy elders most irreverently. Aye, thou hast wounded me, thine own mother, once every day and oftener, and paid me no more regard than if I were a widow, thou matricide. Even the bravest of all warriors, thy father-in-law, hath not the power to daunt thee; but thou hast frequently led him, too, astray, to my pain and sorrow. But, verily, shalt thou repent of all thy tricks, and sour and bitter shall be the cup of pleasure at thy nuptials. Let us see, forsooth, how then shall I proceed? Whither, now that I am made a laughing-stock, shall I go for counsel? What means have I to coerce the slippery little lizard? Ask assistance of that countrified, slovenly dame, Sobriety, who, because on his very account I have so often affronted her, is always my enemy? No, I can do no such thing. My flesh creeps at the thought of an interview with her. But, yes! sweet is the comfort of vengeance, come whence it will! She, and no other in the universe, will so serve my purpose to chastise the little puppy severely,—empty his quiver of its arrows, blunt their points, unstring his bow, extinguish his torch, and compel him to bear the very worst of corporal punishments and disagreeable remedies—abstinence. Nor then, even, will the injury I have suffered be thoroughly atoned for, till I have shorn those shining, golden locks, that these hands so oft have sorted, and clipped the wings steeped in the nectar of my bosom."

Thus spake the highly irritated goddess, who no sooner delivered herself of the violent apostrophe, than, turning on her heel in a boiling, bilious rage, she forthwith burst out of doors away from her palace. There immediately she encountered the two goddesses, Ceres and Juno. They, observing that her features were swollen, and that her face was flushed with excessive anger, inquired the reason why her sparkling eyes, otherwise so mild and fascinating, were coerced by a supercilious frown? "Can you be ignorant," exclaimed she, "of the stories abroad relating to my family, the doings of the youth whom no longer I will call my son? Opportunely, oh! most opportunely, have you come hither to compose my raging bosom, and render me assistance to execute a deed of vengeance. Aid me, then, I pray you, to discover the retreat of the fugitive, wandering Psyche."

Now, both the above-mentioned goddesses were already cognizant of all the events that had happened, as above alluded to; but, nevertheless, both being anxious to soften the impetuosity of Venus's temper, they thus addressed her:—"Wherefore, good mistress, dost thou thus seek the destruction of a damsel with whom thy son hath fallen in love? What sin, forsooth, hath he committed? Why shouldst thou so obstinately oppose thyself to his happiness? Where is the harm, we pray thee, tell us, e'en though—aye, and with right good-will—he hath bestowed a smile or two upon a pretty damsel? Bethink thee of his sex and of

his youthful age. Surely you have forgotten the number of his years, or imagine, forsooth, that because he hath a young appearance, he will remain a boy for ever. Fie upon thee, considerate female as thou art, not only thus inquisitively to pry into the gaieties of thy beautiful son, and take him to task for his loves and indiscretions, but blame him for exercising the agreeable arts and occupations taught him by thine own self. Aye, by thine own self, we tell thee; and let us ask, moreover, which of the gods, or where is the mortal, who will bear with thee, if thus thou run abroad scattering pleasure and delight in every direction among the people, while, within thine own house, the very centre and emporium of female frailty, Love be detained a prisoner ?"

Thus did the two goddesses, fearing they might themselves be one day wounded by the arrows of Cupid, propitiate the God of Love in his absence, while Venus, becoming still more irritated at her having injuries turned into ridicule, haughtily turned her back upon the speakers, and hastily transported herself to the sea.

BOOK VI.

Conclusion of Fifth Episode.—*Cupid and Psyche.*

Departure of Lucius with the Robbers to fetch Booty concealed in a Cave — Their return — Another departure without Lucius — Lucius resolves to escape — Lucius seized by the Robbers' Dame — Lucius, assisted by the Damsel, defeats his Antagonist — Lucius carries off the Damsel — Lucius and the Damsel retaken by the Robbers — Death of the Robbers' Dame — The Robbers condemn Lucius and the Damsel to suffer a cruel death.

Psyche, meanwhile, distracted by various vicissitudes, and incessantly travelling by day, without being able to rest at night, went seeking her husband in all parts of the country. More anxious to find him, in the hope, even though the endearments of a wife proved unavailing, of pacifying his anger towards her, at all events, by her humble prayers. At last, as she was wandering along on her way, she happened to cast her eyes upon the summit of a high mountain, and espied a certain temple. Upon which said she to herself, "How do I know that my husband hath not his place of habitation in the temple I see yonder?" And with that she hastened her pace and directed her course thither; and though she was then thoroughly exhausted by continual

toil, love and hope so accelerated her steps, that she felt her frame refreshed, and climbed the heights of the mountain with renewed vigour, nimbly and skilfully mounting from ridge to ridge, till she arrived at the distant shrine. So soon as she approached the spot, she perceived a great many sheaves of wheat, abundance of wheat-ears, and others twisted into chaplets, lying loose on the ground. There were, together with the above, some ears of barley; and also, immediately in front of the temple, a number of reaping-hooks, and other harvest implements, all promiscuously scattered here and there in a disorderly manner, as the reapers are used to cast such things carelessly out of their hands in the heat of the day. Now Psyche, considering that she ought by no means to fail in religious regard towards the temple, but rather to appeal to the pity and benevolence of the gods, by the observance of all their ceremonies, began diligently to arrange and put in order every one of the things that were thus lying in confusion, and to lay each object apart in its proper place.

While she was thus engaged, the bountiful goddess Ceres, observing how diligently and anxiously she was employed in the performance of the duty towards her temple, exclaimed to her from a considerable distance, "Oh miserable Psyche, how canst thou busy thyself at present with the implements of my temple, or think of aught than to save thyself while Venus in a raging passion is eagerly tracking thy footsteps all over the world, and vows to wreak upon thee

the utmost force of her divine vengeance?" Psyche, so soon as she heard the above words of Ceres, eagerly rushed towards the goddess and threw herself prostrate before her. Then sweeping the ground with her hair, and wetting the feet of the divinity with her tears, which flowed abundantly, she implored her protection in an earnest prayer, as follows:—"I implore thee by thy fruit-bearing right hand, by the joyous ceremonies of harvest, by the silent rites of the Canephoræ, by thy servants the winged serpents of thy car, by the furrows of the Sicilian soil, by the raptive chariot of Pluto, by the earth that closed upon thy daughter descending to the shades below, by Proserpine's dreary nuptials, by the light of the Ætnean torches, and by all the holy mysteries that Eleusis the sanctuary of Attica holds in sacred concealment,—suffer, oh! suffer me for a few days to hide myself in yonder heap of wheat sheaves, until the rage of Venus after a little while be mitigated, or at least till a short interval of rest recruit my worn out strength." When Psyche had concluded her supplication, Ceres replied to her as follows:—"Most truly have thy tears and prayers touched my heart, and fain would I render thee assistance; yet I cannot provoke the displeasure of the worthy goddess, my relative, with whom a league of friendship hath long existed. Hie thee then away quickly from the vicinity of my temple, and be thankful I have not seized hold of thee and made thee prisoner."

Psyche, having encountered this repulse quite contrary to her expectation, was afflicted with twofold grief, and retraced her steps once more the way she came. When she had got to the bottom of the mountain and was again proceeding on her way, she perceived within the precincts of the valley a shady grove, within whose gloomy recesses stood another temple, raised in an admirable style of architecture. Determining not to forego the chance of aid and deliverance were it never so small, but on the contrary resolving to propitiate the favour of the presiding deity of the temple, whichever of the gods it might be, she approached the sacred entrance without hesitation. So soon as she arrived at the door she perceived several votive offerings suspended from the branches of the adjoining trees, and also others hanging to the doorposts, and among them several garments upon which the name of the goddess Juno, to whom they were dedicated, and the special act of grace that the donors had received from the goddess, were wrought in letters of gold.

Psyche accordingly perceiving that the temple belonged to the goddess Juno, immediately fell upon her knees and embraced with her arms the yet tepid altar. Then wiping away her tears she thus addressed the divinity.—"Consort and sister of the mighty Jove, whether thou inhabit the ancient temple of Samos, the place of thy tender infancy and childhood,—or frequent the happy precincts of the lofty Carthage, where they worship thee under the form of a virgin passing through

the heavens in a car drawn by lions,—or preside over the walls of the renowned city of Argos near the banks of the Inachus, where thou art commemorated as the wife of the thundering Jupiter, and queen of all the goddesses,—thou whom the nations in the east venerate under the title Zygia, and those in the west as Lucina, who affords her willing protection to childbearing women; be to me on the present occasion, I implore thee, Juno Sospita, my protectress, and free me, exhausted as I am by the labour and sufferings I have endured, from the overwhelming danger that hangs over me." No sooner had Psyche concluded the above prayer than the goddess Juno, appearing to her surrounded by all her divine dignity, addressed her as follows:—"Oh Psyche, willingly would I accede to thy prayers and grant thy request, but the regulations of propriety forbid me to counteract the will of a daughter-in-law whom I have always loved as if she were mine own offspring. The laws also prohibit me from receiving a fugitive servant like thee without the consent of her employer."

Psyche now, after this second shipwreck of her fortunes, was grievously terrified, and losing all manner of hope of recovering her volatile husband, utterly abandoned herself to despair, regardless of her own welfare. Meanwhile she expressed, as follows, the reflections that agitated her mind:—"What other possible chance have I of relief from my troubles, now that even the goddesses themselves are unable to assist me, in spite of their own inclination? whither shall I

bend my wandering steps? how avoid the snares that surround me on every side? under what roof can I take refuge? whither fly to escape the vigilant piercing eyes of allpowerful Venus? where discover darkness black enough to conceal me? Away then with feminine weakness, Psyche. Let masculine courage steel thy heart, renounce resolutely the vain prospect of thy happiness, and surrendering thyself, though late, to thy mistress of thy own accord, seek to soften her furious rage by submissive behaviour. Nay, peradventure thou wilt find at the abode of his mother him whom you seek."

Psyche having thoroughly made up her mind to try the doubtful experiment at the risk of her life, began to meditate on the manner of proceeding, while Venus, declining for the present to pursue the search after her on earth any longer, transported herself to heaven.

Arrived in the regions of the skies, Venus commanded to be caparisoned the chariot that before her marriage Vulcan had presented to her, constructed with cunning art, a highly burnished golden nuptial gift, the more precious through the very diminution of material, attenuated by the file. A flock of doves inhabited a cote near their mistress's bedchamber. From these, four, milk-white, fluttering forth joyously, and bending their radiant necks to the yoke studded with precious gems, received the Goddess of Love within the vehicle, and flew forward on their way, accompanied by a numerous flight of

sportive twittering sparrows and singing birds that continually whistled their sweet mellifluous strains. As the daughter of heaven approached, the rapidly dispersing clouds unfolded; and as the firmament opened before her, the ethereal heights rejoiced, while the canorous family, fearless of eagles and rapacious hawks, merrily fluttered along. Venus directed her course straight to the royal citadel of Jupiter; and when arrived there, addressing herself with haughty mien to Jove, demanded to be allowed the temporary services of the vocal god Mercury on a special occasion. Jupiter having heard the request of Venus, bent his azure brow in token of assent, whereat Venus greatly rejoiced; and immediately descending from heaven to earth, accompanied by the celestial messenger, she earnestly addressed him as follows, the moment they reached the ground:—"Well dost thou know, Arcadian brother, that thy sister Venus, who in troth ne'er doth aught well without thy assistance, hath long been vainly seeking the place of concealment of Psyche, her runaway handmaiden. Wherefore will it behove thee, for now no other hope remains, to herald forth, before all the world, a reward for her discovery. Bestir thee, then, to prepare thy proclamation with mature caution from the instructions I will give thee, and so carefully describe the various marks and tokens whereby she may be recognized, that no mortal whatsoever, guilty of the crime of affording her a hiding-place, shall excuse himself on the plea of ignorance of my decree."

Thus spake Venus to Mercury, and no sooner had she concluded her admonition to the winged god than she presented him a little book, in which were written the name of Psyche, and particulars relating to her. This done, the goddess immediately transported herself to her abode.

When Venus had departed, Mercury, without the loss of a moment's time, proceeded to obey his orders; and accordingly winging his rapid flight among all the people of the earth, promulgated the bidden proclamation in the following terms:—"Whoever of mortals will either seize and bring back, or discover the hiding-place of the fugitive daughter of a king, and handmaiden of Venus, by name Psyche, shall receive, on application to the crier Mercury, in the myrtle grove behind the temple of Venus, SEVEN SWEET KISSES from the lips of the Queen of Love herself, as a reward for his trouble."

So soon as the proclamation of the above reward became known throughout the earth, all mankind were immediately cock-a-hoop to obtain the honourable distinction, while Psyche, on the contrary, as Mercury hurried along on his way, was deprived of her uttermost grain of hope. Nevertheless she travelled, as she had proposed, unceasingly towards the abode of her mistress Venus; and when she had arrived at the divine habitation, there came out of the palace one of Venus's family, who chanced to meet her. This personage was a female, and her name was HABIT; and the moment

she caught sight of Psyche she exclaimed, her voice elevated to its utmost pitch, "What! thou good-for-nothing wench, hast thou begun at length to discover that thou hast a mistress? Aye, and the more thy impudence, dost thou pretend not to know the trouble we all have had in searching for thee? But now I have got thee, and 'tis well that of all others thou hast fallen into hands than which the claws of Pluto's crabs shall not hold thee more tightly. Soon will I make thee suffer the penalty of thy contumacy." So saying, she audaciously seized hold of Psyche, and burying her hand deep in her hair, violently dragged her, although she made no resistance, into the presence of Venus.

So soon as Venus beheld Psyche, she burst into a loud fit of laughing, and shaking her head at the same time, and clutching in her hand her right ear, as people who are furiously angry are wont to do, she thus exclaimed: "So then, at last forsooth, thou hast condescended to pay thy duty to thy mother-in-law! Or is it that peradventure thou art come to see how fares thy husband after the wound thou inflicted on him? Like a worthy mother-in-law, never fear, I will receive thee. Ho, there! ye servants of mine, Anxiety and Sorrow, where are ye? Come hither."

At the call of Venus the two attendants above mentioned, Anxiety and Sorrow, immediately made their appearance, and Venus having delivered Psyche to them to be tormented, they forthwith began to carry the orders of their mistress into execution. They ac-

cordingly beat the miserable damsel with whips, and inflicted upon her various other tortures that put her to excruciating pain; and when they had done, brought her back again into the presence of Venus. Venus, the moment she saw her again, fell a laughing as she had done before, exclaiming at the same time, "Look at her, I pray you; aye, I pray you, behold her; view her, I say, in her present interesting condition! What, thinkest thou, forsooth, that thou wilt inspire me with compassion?—that the thought of becoming the happy grandmother of thy notable offspring will excite pity in my bosom? A grandmother, indeed! a pretty thing, truly, thus to be called a grandmother in the very flower of my age! Aye, and hear the brat of a vile maidservant called Venus's grandson. Grandson? Nay, but such a title for her progeny is vain and futile. Cupid hath contracted an ill-assorted marriage without the consent of his father, the ceremony hath been solemnized without witnesses in a country palace, and the nuptials are not according to law. Therefore the issue of the marriage, if even we condescend to suffer the infant to be born, will be, at all events, illegitimate."

Venus had no sooner pronounced the above speech than, wrought into a furious rage towards the conclusion, she violently flew upon Psyche, and, rending open the bosom of her dress, and tearing her clothes in a great many places, she shook her by the head, pulled out her hair by the roots, and otherwise

grievously ill used her. At last she commanded her attendants to bring and lay on the ground before her an enormous heap of seeds of different sorts, all mixed confusedly together, wheat, barley, millet, poppy, vetches, lentils, and beans. Then said Venus to Psyche, "Methinks now I have sufficiently deprived thee of thy beauty, and thou art become so ugly that, provided thou art still inclined to fascinate thy lovers, thou wilt have to do so by servitude or other means of endearment than such as thou hast used before. Wherefore, in putting thy industry to the trial, I shall do thee a kindness. Separate then and set apart, each with each, the seeds in the heap yonder; and, harkye, have them all arranged in proper order for my inspection before nightfall."

Then Venus, after delivering over the great heap of seeds to Psyche, gaily departed herself to preside at a nuptial banquet.

Psyche now left alone no sooner began to consider the inextricable confusion of the heap of seeds, and the stupendous task that had been imposed upon her, than she was seized with a fit of consternation, and, being totally unable to lift a hand to extricate herself from her difficulty, remained silent and stupified. Neither would the laborious deed have been performed at all had not a tiny ant, one of the little rural creatures that inhabit the fields, been a witness of the colloquy, and, running eagerly and briskly hither and thither, to and fro, summoned and called together the ants of all the

anthills in the neighbourhood. Commiserating the wife of the potent Cupid on account of being condemned to such a laborious service, and execrating the cruelty of her stepmother, so soon as they were all collected togetner, "Ye nimble children of all prolific earth," exclaimed he, "have pity on a pretty damsel! Come readily; do thy work quickly; and help the wife of the God of Love from her grievous trouble."

The ant had no sooner finished his brief address to his fellows than with one accord the entire six-footed population of the adjoining country rushed forwards towards the heap by myriads, and from very eagerness, tumbling one over another in waves, worked with such unspeakable diligence that every seed in the heap was speedily carried away, grain by grain, and all the different kinds assorted, each apart in its proper place. This done, all the ants instantly got out of sight. And now, at the close of the evening, Venus, exhilarated with wine, and adorned round her waist with a wreath of roses, glittering with dew-drops, returned fragrant with balsams from the nuptial banquet where she had been presiding, and perceiving that Psyche had got her task accomplished with miraculous promptitude, said to her, "The labour that hath been performed is not thy labour; neither is the work the work of thine own hands; but, thou wicked creature, he whom, to his own and to thy sorrow, thou hast caused to love thee hath done it for

thee." With that Venus tossed a piece of coarse bread to Psyche, and herself retired to rest.

Meanwhile Cupid remained under close confinement in his bedchamber, where, in the inner part of Venus's palace, he was shut up, partly to prevent him from inflaming his wound by petulant behaviour abroad, and partly on purpose to keep him away from his beloved Psyche. Wherefore both the lovers passed a miserable night under the same roof, separated from one another.

The next morning, so soon as Aurora had ushered in the day, Psyche was summoned to the presence of Venus, and Venus thus addressed her:—"Behold the grove stretching along the banks of the river yonder. See'st thou the whirling eddies above whose profound depths is a fountain on the brink? Hie thee thither speedily, and thou wilt perceive a flock of sheep whose fleeces glitter with a beautiful golden radiance, wandering at large at pasture, unattended by a shepherd. A parcel of their wool I have need of. Go quick, procure it how thou canst, and bring it me."

When Psyche had received the latter command of Venus she departed with extraordinary alacrity, not that she intended to obey the instructions given her, but with the determination to put an end to her sorrows once for all, and throw herself off the rock into the river. Accordingly she proceeded to the spot as fast as she was able; but when she arrived on the brink of the stream, a green reed, the child of sweet Music,

growing in the water, thus, while agitated by a gentle breeze to a state of divine inspiration, addressed her in prophetic strain:—"Oh Psyche, ever nursed in the lap of calamity, let not thy miserable death pollute the purity of my waters. Neither venture to approach those savage sheep which, browsing upon my bank, and imbibing from the noontide beams of the sun the heat of solar fire, become excited to furious madness. With their sharp horns, and heads hard as yon craggy rock, they gore and butt, and moreover not unfrequently inflict death on mortals by the bite of their venomous teeth. Await then awhile patiently, and when, Phœbus declining from his meridian height, the heat hath subsided, and the animals, soothed by the serene breath of the river breeze, have become tranquil, hie thee to yon tall plane-tree whose roots derive a kindred moisture with mine own from the bed of the stream, and there conceal thyself. Then when thou shalt perceive the sheep relieved from their state of fury lie down to rest, depart from thy hiding place beneath the spreading branches, and seek the inner recesses of the grove, where, shaking the branches of the bushes, thou wilt find clinging to the leaves as much of the golden wool as thou hast occasion for." Thus did the benevolent reed explain in simple terms to the love-sick Psyche the manner to procure her safety; while Psyche adopting its counsel accordingly, neither hesitated for a moment to obey, nor afterwards had reason to repent her obedience.

Without delay, therefore, she departed and concealed herself under the plane-tree; and following besides the rest of her instructions implicitly, found no difficulty at the moment indicated, by means of the prescribed furtive stratagem, to possess herself of as large a quantity of the golden wool as she could conveniently stuff in her bosom. Thus laden with the soft, yellow, fleecy prize, she immediately returned to Venus.

But it was the fate of Psyche not to receive from her mistress even now on the conclusion of her second enterprise its just reward. On the contrary, Venus smiling with a bitter smile, said to her, knitting her brows—"Truly as in the last instance do I perceive in the act thou hast performed the secret author of thy success. Wherefore will I put thee to another proof, and know of a certainty whether the courage and singular prudence thou hast manifested are thine in good truth. Behold those distant mountains crowned by yonder rock, and on the topmost summit, bursting from their craggy source, those streams of black water flowing down into the lake, their receptacle in the valley below, whence pursuing their course through a subterranean channel, they emerge and irrigate the stagnant marshes of the Styx, and the hoarsely roaring Cocytus. Go to the rock with utmost speed, and take with thee this pitcher; when thou hast filled it with the icy water of the highest spring, return with it instantly." So saying, Venus put into Psyche's hand a flagon of elegant shape of crystal, and threatening

her even more cruelly than she had ever done before, bade her proceed on her way.

Psyche, certain of ending her wretched life on the summit of the mountain, accelerated her steps from eagerness to meet her destiny, and strenuously exerting herself until she arrived at the ground near the base of the rock which Venus had shown her, all at once perceived the stupendous fatal difficulty of the undertaking. For the rock was of enormous magnitude and extraordinary height; and the terrific waters that from a central point on its summit were vomited from clefts and apertures, fell headlong for a short distance, and afterwards were carried by a deep, narrow, partly concealed channel, into the valley below. Meanwhile the path to the fountain was rugged, slippery, and inaccessible; and on each side of it, on the right and on the left, among the excavations in the rock, fierce cruel serpents were crawling, stretching out their long necks and glaring with their watchful never-winking eyes, whose pupils were exposed to perpetual light. While Psyche, unable to ascend the path, was gazing in dismay at the terrible spectacle around her, the waters, endowed with human * voice, as it were in their own defence, uttered various precautionary exclamations to the astonished damsel. "Away with thee!" "What dost thou here?" "Look before thee!" "Whither art thou

* The reader no doubt will be reminded here of the talking water, similar to the above, in the tale in the Arabian Nights' Entertainments.

going?" "Have a care!" "Begone!" "Thou art doomed to destruction!" And so forth. Meanwhile the awful impracticability of the task so paralysed Psyche, that deprived of the last consolation of the afflicted, the power to weep, her senses quite deserted her, and though corporeally present, she was the same as if turned into stone.

But ever is the eye of kind Providence attentive to the sufferings of an innocent soul! The mighty Jove, mindful of his former obligations to Cupid, and in honour of the prowess of the God of Love in the person of his wife, dispatched opportunely to the assistance of Psyche his own royal bird, the rapacious eagle; which, appearing suddenly, hovered above her head with both its wings extended. Quitting the ethereal paths of the firmament, the eagle poised itself in the air close before the damsel's face, and spoke to her as follows:—"Why truly thou art a simple damsel! How little dost thou know of the task thou hast undertaken! Thinkest thou, forsooth, to steal a single drop, be it never so small, of yon truculent unapproachable fountain, or even ever to be able to reach the spot? What! Hast thou never even heard of the formidable waters of the Styx, that are dreaded even by great Jove himself? Canst thou be ignorant that, even as you mortals swear by the divinity of the gods, so are the oaths that bind the gods sworn by the Styx's majesty? But give me thy little flagon." Thus saying, the eagle seized the flagon in its beak,

and flapping its pinions as it steered its course to the right and to the left between rows of angry looking teeth and three forked tongues of the serpents, reached the summit of the steep. Then stretching its neck to the fountain it speedily filled the flagon, although the fountain, unwilling to part with its waters, and anxious for the safety of the eagle, bade it beware of its danger, and exclaimed aloud admonitory broken sentences, such as had been heard by Psyche. But the wily messenger, forging a pretence for the occasion, said it was dispatched with the vessel by Venus, who required the water; upon which the fountain, without much ado, allowed it to execute its commission. Which done, the eagle immediately returned the way it came with the full flagon to Psyche.

Psyche no sooner received the brimming flagon from the eagle than forthwith she carried it to Venus; though, alas! not even by this act of promptitude was the good will of the raging goddess to be conciliated. On the contrary, Venus, regarding Psyche with a withering smile, and meditating still more grievous outrages, said to her, "Why surely thou must be a witch, aye, and a most wicked sorceress, or never couldst thou have performed so cleverly the tasks I set thee. But yet, forsooth, will I once more try thee, once more avail myself of thy ministration, my darling." With that Venus produced a little box, and still addressing herself to Psyche, "Take this box," said she, "and with it bend thy course to the lowest

realms of darkness, where thou wilt seek the deadly abode of Pluto, and deliver it to Proserpine. Then say to Proserpine, 'Venus requests thee to send her some of thy beauty, were it only sufficient to last her a short winter's day; for by nursing her sick boy she hath lost every atom she possessed, through weariness.' And now away with thee, then thou wilt return the sooner;—fain would I appear ere long at the theatre of the gods, in full radiance of my charms."

Psyche, on receiving the box from Venus, felt that the veil of her hidden destiny was at length removed, and that the misfortunes now about to be encountered in the coming enterprise would most assuredly be her last. She thought, in short, that she was about to be sent to certain destruction. How indeed is it possible, compelled to go alone on foot to Tartarus, and the shades below, she could think otherwise? Nevertheless Psyche delayed not a moment to set forward on the journey, and had already proceeded some distance when she perceived, a little way on one side of the road, a very high tower. Accordingly, concluding that the nearest and very best way to go to the shades below was to throw herself from off the top of the tower upon the ground, she immediately bent her steps towards it. But when she arrived there and was about to ascend for that purpose, she suddenly heard a voice issuing from the tower that addressed her as follows:—"Why dost thou seek to end thy life, miserable little damsel? Why dost thou suffer thyself to be overcome by this,

thy last labour, and thy last peril? Why rush with suicidal haste to Tartarus? To Tartarus, aye, to its lowest depths, full surely mayst thou go; but no mortal nor immortal power, when once the breath of life hath parted from thy body, can ever recall thee. Listen, then; I will give thee counsel.

"Not far from hence is situated Lacedæmon, a noble city of Achaia, whither thou must go, and there, within its precincts, in a retired spot, concealed by brushwood, thou wilt find the cave of Tænarus. Within the open jaws of that dreary cave, which is, as it were, Pluto's breathing hole, a blind path appears to descend from the entrance, which path thou must follow, and it will lead thee by a direct track to the very palace of Pluto. Empty handed, however, through those regions of darkness, 'tis not meet to proceed; but bear in each of thy hands a cake of barley-flour, steeped in wine and honey, and in thy mouth hold two pieces of money. When advanced along the realms of death a good portion of thy way, the lame driver of a lame ass which thou wilt meet, laden with a load of wood, will beg of thee to pick up from the ground some sticks that have fallen from the load; but heed him not, nor let the slightest sound escape thy lips. Be silent and pass on. Presently thou wilt arrive at the Styx, the river of the dead, and there see Charon, the unearthly prefect, who conducts passengers in his crazy boat across the river. Charon will demand of thee thy passage-money, for avarice is ever alive even among

the dead; nor will Charon, nor Pluto neither, do aught gratuitously. Wherefore the poor man, if about to die, need always ask for his viaticum, which if the people about him have not at hand to give, they ought not to allow him to die.

"Give the dirty old ferryman for thy passage across the river one of the two pieces of money from thy mouth, and be careful that he with his own hand take it from thy lips. An old dead man wilt thou see whilst going across,—a corpse, which, swimming on the surface of the sluggish stream, will stretch forth his putrid arms towards thee, and implore thee to drag him into the boat. But bend not thine ear to pity: 'tis forbidden. On the other side of the river, a little distance from the farther bank, some old women weaving a web of cloth will call out and request thee to assist them for a little while. But again beware: neither go near the women nor touch their web. For all these things, against which I caution thee, ay, and many more also that I tell thee not of, are nought but snares laid by Venus, in order to make thee drop from thy hand at least one of the barley cakes — which accident, if it once betide thee, think not a small misfortune. Although only one be lost, and the other remain, never again wouldst thou see the light of day. The shadowy palace of Pluto is guarded by a terrible, enormous dog, with three large heads and wide gaping jaws, which monster continually barking and terrifying the dead, whom it hath not the power otherwise to

harm than by its voice of thunder, is ever on the watch before the atrium of Proserpine. Toss one of thy cakes to this dog, and thou wilt pass by him easily, and then without farther trouble enter the palace of Proserpine.

"Proserpine will receive thee courteously and kindly; nay, speaking in a soothing tone, will endeavour to persuade thee to rest thyself on a soft couch, and partake of a delicious banquet; but accept not the invitation. On the contrary, sit on the ground and ask for a morsel of coarse bread, which eat, and when thou hast finished thy frugal meal, say quickly what has brought thee. Then thou wilt receive whatever she give thee, and come back the way you came. On thy return, stay the fury of the dog with the other barley-cake, and reserve the other piece of money for the avaricious ferryman; then thou wilt once more safely emerge beneath the stars of yon celestial canopy. One thing above all I strictly charge thee: open not the box, nor even cast thine eyes upon the lid; nay, suffer not thyself to think at all of the beauty of which thou art the bearer."

Thus spoke the tower, which, foreseeing future events, unfolded prophetic mysteries. Psyche accordingly, taking with her the two barley-cakes and the two pieces of money, set forward without delay, and proceeding to Lacedæmon found the cave of Tænarus, which entering, she followed the path that led straight to the infernal regions. As she went along, every-

thing happened precisely as the tower predicted; and, first of all, having passed the lame ass with its lame driver in silence, and afterwards paid one of the pieces of money to the ferryman, and treated with neglect the request of the corpse swimming in the river, and behaved disdainfully to the old weaving women, and, finally, pacified the horrible dog with the sop of food, she penetrated safe and sound to the palace of Proserpine. There, refusing the soft seat offered her by her hostess, declining to partake of a splendid repast, but content with coarse bread, humbly seating herself at the feet of Proserpine, she delivered the message of Venus. Then speedily did Psyche receive back from Proserpine the box which on her arrival she had given her, and the other had secretly filled and closed; after which, immediately setting forward on her return, she practised the same stratagem as before upon the dog, whose barking jaws she closed with the remaining sop, and gave her last piece of money to the ferryman.

Psyche then emerged from the cave of Tænarus, and leaving the infernal regions, had no sooner paid her homage to the bright light of day than she felt exceedingly refreshed in spirits and in strength. At the same time a rash, irresistible curiosity seized her mind, notwithstanding the extraordinary degree of eagerness she felt to complete the service of her mission. Talking to herself, as she went along, "Fool that I am," said she, "to be thus the bearer of a box of

divine beauty, without even taking for myself a morsel, be it never so small. Nay, at all events, were it only for the sake of fascinating my own beautiful lover, I must and will have but a little bit." With that, without more ado, she opened the box, though no beauty nor anything else was within it, with the exception of an infernal, somniferous, truly Stygian vapour, which immediately infusing itself throughout her whole body, and infecting her senses, she was seized with a profound sleep, and fell down in the middle of the path. There, with limbs collapsed and motionless as a corpse, she lay on the very spot where she stood.

Meanwhile Cupid had recovered from the effects of his wound, and was now quite well. Accordingly, no longer able to tolerate the prolonged absence of his beloved, he flew out of a little window in the apartment where he lay, and cutting through the air with more than ordinary rapidity, for his wings were refreshed by rest exceedingly, soon, very soon, reached Psyche. Cleansing her in an instant cleverly from the soporific vapour, and enclosing it again in the box as it was before,* he touched Psyche gently with the point of one of his arrows, upon which, instantly aroused at the innoxious puncture, she sprang upon her feet, and he said to her, "Behold, miserable damsel! now a second

* From the above incident the German story of the shadowless man, Peter Schlemil, whose shadow the devil rolled up and carried away, appears to have its origin.

time hath curiosity well nigh brought thee to destruc tion. But away with thee; complete the enterprise with which my mother hath charged thee, and for the rest which concerns thyself, leave all to me."

The buoyant lover, so soon as he had pronounced the above words, immediately flew away, and Psyche sought the abode of Venus with the present of Proserpine: but Cupid, more desperately in love than ever, anticipating a sudden fit of his mother's severity from her lowering looks, speedily betook himself to his wits, and mounting aloft in the air, darted along the topmost heights of heaven to the abode of Jupiter. There Cupid throwing himself in a supplicating posture at Jupiter's feet, pleaded his cause submissively. Jupiter, raising his hand to his lips, kissed it, and then pinching the cheek of Cupid, thus addressed him:—"My son, and eke my master, although, instead of treating me with the respect that the universal consent of the divinities hath decreed me as father of the gods, thou hast never ceased to shoot thine arrows at this breast of mine, where lies the source of the laws that govern the elements and guide the revolutions of the stars. And ever afflicting me with the love of terrestrial damsels, hast thereby frequently compelled me to infringe the laws—aye, even the Julian edict—to the great detriment of my dignity. Nay, notwithstanding that, on occasions many and various, to the subversion of public morals and injury to mine own reputation, thou hast compelled me to relinquish my serene countenance, and transform myself

into all manner of ugly shapes—serpents, wild beasts, cattle, birds, even into a flame of fire, etc.,—although thou hast done all these things, I say, yet will I not be forgetful of the time when I treated thee kindly as a child, and nursed thee in these arms. Well, all thou hast asked will I do for thee, though let me warn thee, when once thou art married beware of rivals, for to thyself thou wilt have solely to look for protection, as thou art well able. And, hark ye, the good service that I render thee now thou mayest one day requite, if peradventure a maiden of more than common beauty chance to fall in thy way."

Thus spake the mighty Jupiter, and summoning to his presence Mercury, bade him proclaim forthwith an assembly of the gods, under a penalty of ten thousand pieces of money for every one of the divinities, in default of being present; wherefore, the gods being mightily afraid of the penalty, the celestial theatre was filled speedily and completely. And now the lofty Jupiter, seated on his sublime throne above all the rest, thus addressed the deities:—" Ye conscript gods, whose names are duly registered in the white roll of the Muses, 'tis indispensable at length to check the ardent impetuosity of that youth of mine, whom I brought up from a child. With that youth, doubtless, you are all perfectly well acquainted. Suffice it now to make known to you, that, in addition to various scrapes and mischief into which he is falling perpetually, he now is desperately enamoured with a certain

young damsel who hath more than ordinary claims on his fidelity. Wherefore, in order to remove at once the occasion of similar irregularities, let him be bound fast in the fetters of matrimony, and have, hold, and for ever enjoy the love and society of the maiden of his choice. Daughter," continued Jupiter, turning his face towards Venus, "give thyself no uneasiness, nor apprehend the loss of family dignity through a mortal alliance. I will order it otherwise; both parties shall be on a par—equals shall be joined to equals in a legitimate marriage, according to the civil law."

When Jupiter had concluded his address to the gods, he immediately ordered Mercury to find Psyche and bring her up to heaven, upon which Mercury obeyed his instructions instantly, and rapidly winging his course to the earth, returned with her without delay. Then Jupiter taking in his hand a cup of ambrosia, and extending it towards Psyche, said to her, "Take this, Psyche, and become immortal! The bonds of thy nuptials with Cupid will be perpetual, and he shall never more desert thee."

Then was served instantaneously a delicious wedding supper, at which the bridegroom, with Psyche reclining on his bosom, occupied the uppermost couch; and all the gods and goddesses, arranged similarly in pairs according to their rank, and beginning with Jupiter and Juno, surrounded the table. Cups of nectar were served to Jupiter by his rural cupbearer Ganymede—

to all the rest by Bacchus; and the banquet was cooked by Vulcan. The Hours strewed roses and flowers on the ground till all surrounding objects glowed with purple; the Graces scattered perfumes and balsams in the air; the Muses joined chorus with their full sonorous voices; Apollo attuned his song to the harp; and Venus, keeping time beautifully with her feet, danced to the music of a satyr and Paniscus, who played the pipe and the flute. And thus Psyche, becoming Cupid's lawful wife, was in due time brought to bed of a daughter, whom we call PLEASURE.

END OF FIFTH EPISODE.

The old woman, whose imagination as she proceeded was warmed by wine to a state of delirium, now concluded the relation of her story to the captive damsel, while, by Hercules! I felt truly vexed, having been standing near at hand listening all the while, that I had neither pen, nor note-book, nor the power of committing to writing such a pretty fable. But while such reflections as these were passing in my mind, lo and behold, the robbers returned all of a sudden to the cave from their excursion. I know not where they had been, but they had had a grievous battle somewhere,

and were laden with booty, though several of their packages were left behind in a place of concealment, whither some of the most daring spirits now proposed to return and fetch the articles, leaving at home their wounded companions to have their wounds taken care of. Accordingly, so soon as they had hastily gobbled down their dinner, they immediately proceeded on the proposed expedition, taking with them me and my horse to serve as beasts of burden, and thrashing us with their sticks from our stable into the road, they drove us up hill and down hill, through rough winding roads, till we arrived, at an early hour in the evening, at a cave, the place of our destination. There, notwithstanding we were miserably tired, we were not allowed a moment's time for refreshment; but they loaded us immediately with grievously heavy burdens, and drove us back the way we came. Indeed, from the fear of being pursued, they hurried us along in such a manner with their cudgels that at last, by flinching to avoid their blows, I tripped over a stone that lay on the road, and falling down bruised my near hoof and considerably hurt my off fore leg. While they were compelling me to rise, which put them to not a little trouble, said the one to the other, "Why the ass is dead lame already! How much longer shall we be at the pains to feed such a foundered animal?"

"'Twas under an evil omen he came to us," replied his companion; "nothing but bad luck have we had ever since we got him. Some of our bravest comrades

have been killed, others badly wounded, and all the booty we have taken is no compensation."

"Truly," said a third, "he shall carry home his load whether he will or not, and so soon as we arrive I'll push him over the precipice. He'll make a dainty meal for the vultures at all events."

Then did these very humane gentlemen begin to altercate with one another with regard to the sort of death I was to be made to suffer; while fear, as I heard all they were saying, made wings of my hoofs as it were, and finding myself compelled to yield to its forcible inspiration, we speedily finished our journey. So soon as we arrived at the cave, without giving themselves the least concern about my horse and myself, or even taking the trouble to put me to death, they unloaded and carried within the things lifted off our backs, and taking with them their companions whose wounds were now dressed, they all sallied forth together on another excursion, to make up, as they said, for the time they had lost owing to our sluggishness.

So soon as they had all departed, I made no scruple in making up my mind what to do, and said to myself, "Why dost thou stand still here, oh Lucius? Why thus tamely await the last of mortal calamities? Thou art condemned by the robbers to death, aye, a most cruel death, and how easily can they carry thy sentence into execution! Behold, projecting from yon rocky cliffs, those angular crags whose points, fall

where thou wilt, will penetrate thy body and tear thee limb from limb; for, although the famous magic thou wert once so fond of hath given thee the form and inflicted on thee the labours of an ass, it hath covered thee with a skin no more capable of affording thee protection than if it were the tender cuticle of a horse-leech. Then bestir thyself; arouse all thy virile energy, and while yet it is in thy power have a care to thine own preservation. Now thou hast an excellent opportunity for flight while the robbers are away. What! Dost thou fear thy keeper?—an old, decrepit woman, already half dead, whom a single kick, were it only from that lame hoof of thine, would utterly demolish? Aye, truly! But whither then wilt thou direct thy flight? What people? Who will give thee shelter and a home?"

Though the last was a silly, or more properly an asinine reflection—for where is the traveller who will not willingly ride off upon an ass that falls in his way?—I nevertheless made a violent effort, and, with a sudden jerk, snapping asunder the leathern thong that confined me, was merrily starting away on my quadrupedal course; but being unable to evade the hawk-eyes of the cunning old woman, she, the moment she perceived me loose, seized me by the halter, and with a strength and audacity beyond her age and sex, struggled most lustily, and did all that possibly lay in her power to stop me and pull me back. I, meanwhile, thinking of the fatal design the robbers had upon me,

felt no pity for the old woman, but immediately flinging out at her with both my hind feet, laid her on the ground sprawling. Then I galloped off, and dragged her along, while she held on fast by the leathern thong, lying flat on her stomach, screaming and howling terribly, and vainly calling on those whose arms were stronger than her own to come and help her. But neither were her tears, nor all the noise she made, of any use; not a human being, nor any one capable of rendering assistance, made their appearance; nobody, indeed, but the young captive damsel, who, alarmed at the sound of the old woman's cries, came running out of doors, and, by Hercules! saw a scene in a memorable play enacted,—the old woman performing the part of Dirce; and though not, in truth, tied to a wild bull's tail, hanging to an ass's halter.

The young damsel, meanwhile, attempted a noble enterprise at the momentous crisis. Seizing hold of the thong, wrenching it out of the hand of the old woman, and moderating my pace by whispering a few soothing words in my ear, she nimbly, and with truly masculine courage, leaped upon my back, and urged me to my utmost speed. For my own part, I felt myself at the moment gifted with a double impulse,—the inclination to run away of my own accord, and a desire of liberating the damsel, who added considerable force to her persuasion by giving me frequent stripes. The ground, meanwhile, shook under the concussion of my four hoofs, as I ran with a horse's swiftness, sometimes

endeavouring by braying to imitate the sweet damsel's voice, and at other times, bending round my neck under pretence of scratching my back, to kiss her beautiful feet.

At last, the damsel, heaving a deep sigh, burst forth in an exclamation, and looking with an anxious countenance up to heaven, "Ye gods," said she, "render me at last your assistance in this extreme peril; and Fortune, cruel Fortune, cease thy fury; for thee, at least, surely, I have appeased by the sufferings I have now endured." Then continued she, addressing herself to me, "And thou, preserver of my life and liberty, shouldst thou take me home, and deliver me safe to my parents and my beautiful lover, how earnestly, oh! how gratefully will I thank thee! what honours will I pay thee! how daintily will I feed thee! These maiden hands shall entwine jewels in thy mane; shall part prettily the rough hair upon thy forehead; shall comb and disentangle the matted bristles of thy long-neglected tail. I will inoculate thee all over, thick as the stars of the firmament, with golden, glittering studs, and lead thee forth triumphantly in all our popular processions. And then, oh! my deliverer, I will pamper thee with sweetmeats, and bring thee pine-apples every day in my silken apron. Aye, and even yet more will I do for thee. Glory and dignity shall also be thine in the eyes of posterity. Not only shall delicate food, all manner of comforts, and profound rest delight thee for the remainder of thy life, but

I will commemorate the beneficence of divine providence and this adventure by a lasting memorial. A votive picture shall be painted and suspended in the atrium of our palace, whence all the world shall view with admiration a noble specimen of the painter's art, and the pens of the learned hand down to remote generations the history of our flight. Thence a fable will be originated, and last for ever, under the homely title of "A Royal Virgin flying from captivity on the back of a donkey." In future ages, this deed of thine will be reckoned among the ancient miracles; for who, taught by thy truthful memorial, will doubt thereafter, that Phryxus crossed the sea on the back of a ram, that Arion bestrode a dolphin, or that a bull transported Europa over the waves? Nay, if Jupiter did ever actually bellow under a bovine form, there is surely concealed in thee somewhat of human or divine."

The young damsel had hardly concluded her soliloquy, and was continuing to express herself in broken sentences, occasionally interrupted by sighs, when, all of a sudden, we came to a place where the road before us branched into two, and the three roads met together. Now, as the right hand road led to the abode of the young damsel's parents, she pulled hard at the halter, and tried as much as was in her power to make me go that way. I, on the other hand, knowing the latter was the road taken by the robbers, who had gone to fetch the remainder of their booty, stoutly objected; and while I resisted her efforts, mentally

expostulated as follows:—"What, oh! miserable damsel, art thou going to do? Whither wouldst thou go? Why thus hasten to the shades below? Why, at all events, oblige me to carry thee thither? For 'tis not thyself alone, but me also, thou wouldst bring to destruction."

Thus we went on for some time striving one against the other, each desirous of going a different way, and disputing the ground like the coheirs of a patrimony in a lawsuit. At last, all of a sudden, we were surprised by the robbers, laden with their booty, who recognising us a long way off by the light of the moon, came stealthily upon us; and one of them, with a malignant smile on his countenance, addressed the following salutation to the damsel:—"Whither now at this late hour of the night? what art thou going to do along yonder road by moonlight? what! hast thou no fear for ghosts and goblins? or, dutiful daughter as thou art, wouldst thou pay thy parents a clandestine visit? but we will show thee thy nearest way, and be a guard to thee in thy solitude." With that, suiting the action to the word, he caught me by the neck with one of his hands, and seizing the halter with the other, pulled me round, and without more ado began to drive me back the way I came, beating me at the same time without mercy, with a great knotted stick that he carried with him. Thus compelled, against my will, to return to the cruel death in store for me, recollecting that I had hurt my hoof, I began all of a sudden to nod my head

and to limp as I went along; upon which said the robber, he who pulled me back, "What! dost thou begin again to stagger and stumble? Lookye now! why those foundered hoofs of thine that thou canst hardly bear to set on the ground, carried thee, forsooth, while thou wast running away, with the speed of a winged Pegasus." And so did my gentle comrade continue for some time to talk to me in a jocular strain, shaking his stick at me all the while till we arrived at the outer fence of the robbers' abode; when, lo! and behold, the first object we perceived was the old woman hanging by a noose round her neck to the branch of a tall cypress tree. The robbers immediately took her down, and after tying her neck and heels with her own rope threw her over a precipice. Then putting fetters on the damsel, they sat down to supper, and like so many wild beasts, devoured the banquet—a posthumous act of diligence, as it were—that the miserable little old woman had prepared!

And now, while with greedy voracity they were tearing their victuals in pieces with their teeth, the first topic that arose to be discussed among them was how to gratify their revenge, by inflicting suitable punishment on the damsel and myself. As is invariably the case in every turbulent assembly in the consideration of an affair of importance, the opinions expressed on the subject were many and various. One robber, for example, proposed that the damsel should be burnt alive; another said she ought to

be thrown to wild beasts; a third recommended to have her nailed to the cross; and a fourth declared her flesh should be torn from her body with pincers. In short, all were unanimous in condemning her to suffer death in one way or another. At last one comrade of the band, after procuring silence among his fellows, addressed them in a remarkably smooth, placid tone of voice as follows:—"I cannot permit you, neither is it conformable to your own merciful dispositions, to the regulations of our sect and college, or indeed to my own feelings, to exercise in this affair a degree of vengeance as disproportioned to the crime as it is unreasonable in itself. Let us hear no more of your fire, of your cross, of your wild beasts, or of your pincers; neither be in such a violent hurry as to inflicting the punishment of death that you propose. But listen to the counsel I will give you, and then doubtless you will agree to concede to the damsel just so much and no more life than she deserves to enjoy. With regard to the ass, and the sentence which you cannot have forgotten is already passed upon him,—since he hath ever been a lazy brute and an enormous eater, hath shammed lame, and been an accomplice in the damsel's flight,—I would recommend you to cut his throat to-morrow. I would then further submit to your consideration, that having extracted from him his bowels and all his inside, the damsel, since she hath been inclined to prefer his company to that of ourselves, should be sewn up in his hide in such a manner that her body

be all as one, as the body of the animal, and her head alone protrude and be visible. Both the ass and the lady, when thus stitched together and abandoned on some rugged rock, exposed to the burning rays of the sun like a stuffed sausage, will very justly suffer the sentences you have determined upon. For while he will be put to death as he justly deserves, she will actually be made to suffer every jot of the torments you just now decreed her. For wild beasts will tear her limb from limb, worms will devour her remains, the fire of the sun scorch her. And as regards the pangs of the cross,—either the dogs and vultures will drag forth her entrails, and so destroy her, or,—a living creature confined within the putrefying body of a dead ass, and deprived of the use of hands to rid herself of a miserable existence,—she must perish of deadly hunger."

Here the robber concluded a speech that was received by his comrades with stamping of the feet, and other tokens of universal applause. Every one, in fact, agreed with him with all their hearts to carry the above sentence into execution. Which when I heard with my long ears, how could I do otherwise than bewail my poor body, that the very next morning was to be a dead carcase?

BOOK VII.

Arrival of a Spy of the Robbers from Hypata — Proposal to recruit their Troop — A new Recruit — His History and liberal Contribution — The Recruit chosen Leader of the Troop — Discussion relating to the fate of the Damsel and Lucius — a Sacrifice to Mars — Grand Supper of the Robbers — the new Leader *factotum* — Lucius's displeasure at the new Leader's behaviour towards the Damsel — An interesting Discovery — Escape of the Damsel Charity with her lover Tlepolemus and Lucius — Their triumphal entry into the native City of Tlepolemus and Charity — Lucius sent to free Pasture — Is delivered to the care of the Master of the Stud of Horses — Lucius's Disappointment — Lucius put into a Mill — Lucius at last sent to Pasture — Lucius ill-used by the Horses — Lucius brings Wood from the Mountains — A cruel Donkey-driver — Lucius falsely accused by the Donkey-driver — Death of the Donkey-driver and escape of Lucius — Lucius seized by a Stranger — The Stranger taken, and Lucius retaken by the Servants of his late Master — Lucius cruelly beaten by the Mother of the Donkey-driver.

The bright chariot of the Sun had dispersed the darkness of night, and his newly risen orb was illuminating the surrounding objects, when there arrived at the abode of the robbers another of their comrades: at least by the mutual salutations that passed between all of them, so he appeared to be. Panting for want of

breath, he sat himself down immediately, at the entrance of the cave, whence, after he had a little recovered, he addressed himself to the members of his college, and proclaimed his business, as follows :—

" With regard to the house of Milo, that we plundered at Hypata, brave gentlemen, you may set your minds at rest, and make yourselves quite easy. After you left Hypata, and having carried away everything from the house, were gone home with the booty, I remained there according to your instructions, and mixing among the various groups of people conversing on the event that had happened, sought to learn what measures were in progress against our band. Assuming a sorrowful countenance and an air of excessive indignation, I listened eagerly all the while to every word that was said on the subject of our adventure, in order that I might bring you information as agreed upon, of the various opinions expressed by different people relating to the discovery and pursuit of us. I am now therefore able to state for a certainty that all the arguments and all the reasoning on probabilities among the entire multitude brought them every man unanimously to one common conclusion ; namely, that a certain Lucius, a person whom, by the way, I never heard of, is the author of the deed in question. This Lucius, they say, provided with fictitious letters, stating him to be a person of respectability, introduced himself a little while ago into the house of Milo, where, having been hospitably entertained for several days, he took an oppor-

tunity, by making treacherous professions of love to the maid servant, and procuring her assistance, to explore the various locks and fastenings about the house, and learn particularly the apartments where Milo kept his treasure. But the principal proof that they assign of his guilt, and hold to be incontrovertible, is, that he disappeared on the very night, nay, at the very hour of the robbery; nor since the moment he absconded, say they, has he ever been heard of. And they add still further, that in order to baffle his pursuers by a more rapid flight, and take refuge in a distant country, he took with him a white horse that belonged to him, and he was accustomed to ride. He had a servant, whom the magistrates, since he was received with his master into Milo's house, considering he must necessarily be an accomplice, and able to bear testimony against him, cast at once into the public prison, whence they took him out the next morning and put him to the torture. Nevertheless, although they tore nearly all the flesh from his bones with pincers, and tortured him in various ways till he was all but dead, not a syllable of the matter in question could they prevail upon the fellow to confess. Therefore they forthwith dispatched a great many messengers to different parts of this Lucius's native country, and have directed them to make all possible inquiries after the criminal in order to bring him to justice."

Here the robber concluded the narrative of his proceedings to his companions, while I, drawing a com-

parison in my mind between the condition of the once happy Lucius and my present untoward calamities in the form of a miserable jackass, groaned to my very marrow. "Sound indeed is the doctrine of our learned men," thought I to myself, "who comment on the blindness of Fortune, and say she is altogether deprived of eyesight. Wherefore else doth she so bestow her riches on the wicked and unworthy, and injudiciously select as the objects of her bounty, persons whom, if she had eyes to see, she would surely fly away from? Worst of all, why place mankind before the world under false appearances, bestow the reputation of the man of probity on the nefarious doer, and heap punishment for the crimes of the wicked on the head of the virtuous? In short, why hath she, by the most cruel caprice imaginable, transformed me into a dumb animal, the very lowest quadruped of all the orders of creation, and after inflicting upon me a misfortune that would excite the pity of the most hard-hearted being on earth, now charge me with a crime, not merely burglarious robbery, but actually parricide—robbing the house of my very dear worthy host?" At last, although entirely deprived of the power of uttering a word in my own defence, I was so overpowered by impatience at the idea of the malicious imputation going abroad against me, and the fear, were I to acquiesce in the accusation, of having hereafter to suffer the pain of an evil conscience, that I resolved no longer to hear such things said of me

in silence, but make a violent effort to pronounce two words at any rate. Screwing up my mouth accordingly in the proper circular form suited, as I thought, to exclaim the words NON FECI, I bellowed forth the first so immoderately loud that I set my pendulous lips a quivering. I repeated it several times successively, but alas! nothing but NON, NON, NON, NON, was I able to ejaculate—not a particle of FECI could I utter, strain how I would.

But why should I be at further pains to declaim on the cruel usage, nay, on the impudence of Fortune; which, not even contented with transforming me into an ass, had actually reduced me to the servile condition of my own horse's companion? To say the truth, while the above reflections were passing in my mind, another still more important consideration was at work within me, with regard to the sentence of death passed upon me by the robbers, and whenever occasionally I cast a side glance upon my flanks, my agitated imagination made me fancy my paunch already distended with the fair form of the damsel.

The robber who had just related the false news concerning me, so soon as he had done speaking, unripped some stitches in his garments, and taking out a thousand pieces of gold, which he had concealed there,—money, as he said, taken from many different travellers,—he delivered them to his comrades, to be placed in their chest for the common benefit. This done, he began to make particular inquiries relating

to the prosperity of the band; to which they replied by announcing the death of some of their bravest companions, and informing him of many other severe casualties they had undergone. Hearing the above intelligence, he earnestly recommended his brethren to leave the highways in peace for a little while, and desist altogether from their predatory excursions until a sufficient number of young, new hands were recruited, and their martial force once more completed to its full complement. Were they to apply themselves strenuously to this object, he said, "they would meet with little difficulty, since many might be compelled against their own will to enter their service, others by the aid of a bribe be induced to come of their own accord, and not a few would joyously renounce their former life of abject servility, to identify themselves with a sect, conferring a sort of regal dignity on all its members. He himself," he added, "had recently made acquaintance with a most suitable personage, in age quite a youth, but of extraordinary stature, and corresponding strength; he had talked to him a good deal," he said, "and finally had persuaded him to use the advantages of health while he was yet able, and instead of letting his strong arms hang clumsily at his sides in idleness, or be stretched forth submissively to ask alms, employ them forthwith in the more manly purpose of clutching gold on the highway." All the robbers unanimously consented to this proposal, and agreeing to replenish their numbers, and take the

necessary steps immediately to do so, applauded the speaker for what he had done. With regard to the new enlistment, they bade him go bring the young recruit to the cave as soon as possible.

So soon as the robber had received the commands of his comrades, away he went, and remaining absent a very short time, returned again, bringing with him just such a person as he had described,—an enormous young man; so big, in fact, that, as far as I could judge, there was not a single robber among them all to be compared to him. In addition to his bulk, he was a full head taller than any one, and yet his cheeks had only just begun to be covered with a downy beard. His clothes, consisting of different patches of cloth badly sewn together, hardly covered more than half his muscular body, which here and there, especially through rents and fissures about the breast and stomach, seemed bursting from confinement. So soon as he entered the cave he thus addressed the robbers: "Hail! to you, brave gentlemen, clients of the noble Mars, now my faithful comrades. Willingly, I pray you, receive into your ranks one who willingly joins you; a fellow of stout, lively heart, like yourselves; one who can take the slash of a sword more kindly than a handful of money, and fears not to meet—no, not even were it grim Death himself, who frightens everybody. By these ragged clothes, I pray you, judge not my valour; for 'tis no abject pauper that stands before you, but the leader not long ago of a band of comrades, who, brave

as the bravest of you all, ravaged all Macedonia. Even now all the province trembles at the name of Hæmus of Thrace! The Robber! Son of the robber Thero!

"Educated, aye, nourished with human blood under my father's tutelage, I lived among a troop of banditti, zealous of my paternal prowess; though short hath been the period wherein I have lost many, many companions of my early youth, and vast wealth that I possessed. To make myself more intelligible, I will relate circumstances in order. An imperial functionary, factor or supervisor, holding various other public offices, and a favourite in the court of Cæsar, in consequence of false, invidious, slanderous reports that prevailed against him, was suspended in all his employments, and ordered into exile. His wife Plotina, a woman of singular virtue, who, by giving birth to ten children, had already placed the family of her husband on a permanent foundation, now, determining to be his associate in misfortune and companion of his retreat, she cut off her hair, put on man's apparel, and intrepidly set forth on the journey. With a sum of money in gold, together with her most valuable jewels concealed in a girdle round her waist, she bade adieu to the charms and luxuries of the city, and, surrounded by the naked swords of the soldiers, who vigilantly guarded her husband, administered to his comfort and his health in the character of one of his attendants. She had thus undergone extraordinary hardships by sea and by land with masculine courage,

until being at sea, on their voyage to Zacynthus,* which island evil destiny had determined upon as the place of banishment, they arrived at a part of the coast of Actium near Oratum,† and cast anchor at a time when our band had descended thither from Macedonia. There they went on shore, in order to escape the tossing of the waves in the vessel during the night, and took up their quarters in a small tavern. We accordiugly, who happened that night to be roving in the vicinity in quest of plunder, attacked them, and took all they had. With difficulty we escaped from this tavern in safety; for the mistress, so soon as she heard the noise at the gate, ran into one of the bedchambers, and not only turned the whole house topsyturvy by her noise and clamour, but alarmed all the neighbours. She screamed out for the soldiers, called all her servants by their names, and made such a disturbance, that, were it not for the general panic she created, and that all the people rather strove to hide themselves than make resistance, we certainly should not have got away at all.

"Immediately subsequent to the above event, that excellent wife, Plotina—for, to speak the truth, she was a pattern of female fidelity, and a most accomplished lady—forwarded a memorial to Cæsar, beseeching his imperial protection; whereupon the

* The present Island of Zante.

† Commentators have not precisely determined the position of Oratum or Orato.

vengeance of the emperor was speedily directed against ourselves, and her husband was recalled from banishment. No sooner, in consequence of this memorial, had Cæsar denounced the college of Hæmus the robber, than —mark the effect of a nod of the head from a potent prince—our band were forthwith hunted down, cut to pieces, destroyed and annihilated, by the imperial light cavalry. For my own part, thus it was, that with the utmost difficulty I contrived to make my escape, and sally forth, as it were, from the very jaws of Tartarus. My cheeks at that time being smooth and boyish, I disguised myself like a woman, in a coloured dress, arranged in easy folds about the bosom; and having twisted a small turban, in female fashion, round my head, and put women's thin white shoes upon my feet, I mounted, assuming the character of one of the weaker sex, on the back of an ass, and seated myself among some sheaves of barley. Covered and concealed as well as I was able, I passed through the middle of the ranks of the very soldiers in pursuit of us, who, though they might have perceived a puerile glittering on my upper lip, took me for the ass driver's wife, and allowed me to pass free. Hemmed in by martial blades on every side, I felt somewhat uneasy, although not forgetful even under those critical circumstances of my own valour or my paternal glory, I contrived, alone and unassisted, under the protection of my female dress, to rob a few villas and castles by the way. And here is a little viaticum that I procured towards the expense of my journey."

With that he threw aside his rags, and drew from his bosom a purse containing two thousand pieces of gold, which throwing on the ground in the midst of the robbers,—"There," said he, "take that bag of money, mine own donation, a freewill offering to your college, and take myself as your faithful and true leader, who will ere long, if so it please you, line this your rocky habitation with walls of gold." The young man here concluded his harangue; and no sooner had he finished than the robbers, without a moment's doubt or hesitation, unanimously accepted his proposal, and received him as their leader. They then accordingly divested him in the first place of the garments he had on, and clothed him with others, which, though not so rich as those he threw off, improved his appearance mightily. When he had completely changed his dress, he kissed every one of his new companions in succession, and then was led to the table, and placed on the couch at the head of it. Presently, supper being served, they proceeded to inaugurate his election with copious draughts of wine.

During their repast the conversation among the robbers turned in the first place on the subject of the young damsel's flight, and the manner she had ridden away upon my back; and then they talked about the monstrous death that both of us had been condemned to suffer; upon which the new leader, having inquired where the damsel was confined, they conducted him to the place, and showed him her. When he saw her

heavily laden with chains, curling his nose with a contemptuous air to those about him, he turned round on his heel and returned to the supper table. There the robbers immediately resumed their former conversation, upon which they were thus addressed by their new chief:—

"I am not," said he, "so silly and void of experience; nor, indeed, would I at all events be rash enough to oppose of my own authority a sentence that has been decreed by all of you unanimously. But my conscience, at the same time, prohibits me from concealing from you my opinion on a subject relating to our mutual interest, and telling you candidly what, under present circumstances, I think ought to be done. Give me your attention for a few moments, and place confidence in the real solicitude I entertain for your prosperity: and when you have perfectly understood the proposal I have to make to you, you may even then, should it chance to displease, return to your former determination, and dispose of the young damsel and the ass as you think proper. Now, according to my opinion, there is one, of all other things in the world, that robbers, that is to say, all who call themselves sensible, considerate, accomplished robbers, ought to prefer to every other earthly object, to set even above their desire of vengeance—which, by the way, is frequently as detrimental to those who inflict it as to the suffering party—and, in short, make their whole and sole consideration. I mean money. A robber should alone

look to his pecuniary profit. For example; with respect to the circumstances under consideration, we will suppose that as you have determined you kill the ass and sew up the virgin in his belly. Well; what do you gain thereby? You gratify a sense of indignation—nothing more. On the other hand, the measure I would advise you to adopt is this. Send the maiden to some populous city, and there sell her for a slave. Young, and good looking, she would surely bring us a good round sum of money: nay, even among some of my former acquaintance, I think I could readily find a purchaser, in whose service she would not only afford to yourselves the satisfaction of revenge, but ever be effectually prevented from making her escape. This is the counsel that, as it comes from my heart, I freely give you, though you yourselves are the responsible actors in your own deliberations."

Thus did the egregious advocate of the robbers' fiscal revenue plead successfully, as it turned out, the cause of the virgin and the ass, although, during the considerable time they were coming to a decision, my spirit and bowels were much fretted by their long delay. However, at last they acceded to their new chief's proposal, and the damsel was immediately released from her chains. While they were loosening her fetters in his presence and at the same time were talking about selling her for a slave, I observed the young woman's countenance become immediately overspread with a joyful smile, which inspired me with a feeling of indigna-

tion against the female sex altogether, seeing before me as I did—now rejoicing at the idea of being sold for a slave—a damsel whom, only a little while before, I had heard professing the most ardent attachment for the youth of her own choice, to whom she was betrothed in marriage. And thus it happened that for a few moments, the merits and the morals of the whole sex were depending on an ass's judgment, till my reflections were interrupted by an exclamation of the young chief to his comrades.—"Let us away to sell the damsel and procure new recruits," said he; "and first, that our endeavours and our search may be crowned with success, let us supplicate the aid of our patron deity, Mars. Let us away I say, and procure at the nearest castle what we have instant need of: for we have neither a single sheep to sacrifice, nor wine to drink. Give me ten comrades for the service, and by Hercules, we'll bring you provisions enough to make a banquet for the Salii."

Ten comrades being immediately allotted to the new leader, they all departed without a moment's delay; while, in the mean time, the remainder of the band employed themselves in lighting an enormous fire, and erecting upon the green turf an altar to the god Mars. The robbers wrought with such assiduity that when their companions returned from the marauding party the work was already completed; and no sooner had the others entered, bringing with them a quantity of wine in goat skins, and brandishing their sticks in the

air over the backs of the creatures they were hurrying on before them, than from among these they selected a great rough old he goat and immediately offered him up a sacrifice to Mars, their associate and swordsman.

When the sacrifice was over, and while they were all preparing a splendid supper, said the new chief to his comrades, "Now will I let you see, that not only can I lead an expedition, and am a good collector of booty, but know also how to provide for your pleasures, and lay out an entertainment. And with that he set to work lustily, and with extraordinary skill and alertness put everything in order. He swept the floor, arranged the couches, laid the table, seasoned the stews, and otherwise beautifully attended to the cookery. Especially when they began to sup, he plied the part of butler to admiration, and supplied all his comrades with wine as fast as it ran down their throats. And in addition to all, he waited diligently on the young damsel into the bargain, nay, frequently under pretence of fetching something he had need of, carried her secretly the most delicate morsels taken from the robbers' table. But what displeased me mightily was, that not only she readily received all his ordinary attentions, but would smile upon him when, after previously taking a draught of wine himself, he presented her the cup. Once in particular, when he gave her the cup, I actually saw him kiss her!" "Shame on thee, unmarried maiden as thou art," thought I to myself, "how canst thou be thus forgetful of thy faithful

lover and thy nuptials? How thus prefer a stranger and a cruel homicide to the youth, whomsoever he may be, that thy parents have designed for thee? What! doth not thy conscience upbraid thee, even while swords and lances are gleaming in thine eyes, thus to trample upon thine affections, and be guilty of such levity? If peradventure the robbers perceive thee, what will be the consequence? Will they not return to their former sentence of sewing thee up in the ass's belly? Wilt thou not be the means of bringing me to destruction, as well as thyself? Verily the game thou art playing is at the risk of another's skin."

Thus reasoning with myself in consequence of the deep indignation I felt, I had continued to calumniate the damsel in the above strain for a considerable while; at last I discovered, from certain ambiguous expressions that fell upon my ears, expressions, however, that in the ears of a prudent jackass like myself were divested of obscurity, that the new made chief, so far from being Hæmus the robber, was one Tlepolemus, her own bridegroom, paramour, and true lover. The fact grew clearer and clearer as their conversation proceeded, till at last, paying no regard at all to my presence, "Sweetest Charity," said he, "take courage, and right speedily all thy enemies shall be thy prisoners." So saying, and returning to the table, where his companions, already overcome with wine, were in a state of crapulous intoxication, he plied

them with greater assiduity than before with pure unmixed wine warmed to a gentle heat over the fire, while he himself totally abstained from drinking. Nay, by Hercules, I have a suspicion he mixed some noxious soporiferous drug with their liquor, so quickly did every one of them, without a single exception, lie stretched upon the ground like dead—aye, buried in insensibility. They were so perfectly helpless, that the late chief Tlepolemus, now the young lady's lover, had not the least difficulty to do with them just as he pleased. Accordingly binding them hand and foot with very strong cords, and there leaving them, he lifted the young damsel on my back, and we proceeded on our way to their home.

When, after a prosperous journey, we arrived at the city where the young damsel and Tlepolemus lived, the whole population, on learning the happy event of her return home, came out to meet us in a body; and as we entered the streets, there came rushing out of their houses, and pouring forth their congratulations, parents, relatives, dependents, servants, slaves, persons of all ages and both sexes, forming altogether an assemblage of the most happy-faces imaginable, and, by Hercules, a most memorable spectacle,—the triumphal procession of a maiden entering into her native city on the back of a donkey. For my own part, anxious to show that I anticipated in the general joy, and exhilarated by the masculine spirit within me, I prieked up my ears, snorted through my nostrils, and, bravely braying as

loud as ever I was able, I raised a most thundering clamour.

And now Tlepolemus, after leaving the young damsel at her parents' house, where caresses and all manner of comforts were showered upon her in profusion, departed forthwith on his return to the robbers' cave. He took with him myself and several other beasts of burden, driving us all together along the road accompanied by a crowd of the citizens; and it was with exceeding willingness that I undertook this journey, for I was curious and longed much to see the robbers taken prisoners, as they were very speedily. Finding them on our arrival even still more overpowered with the effects of wine than by the cords that bound their limbs, Tlepolemus, assisted by his companions, dragging most of them out of the cave without more ado, bringing them, confined by the ropes, just as they were, to the verge of the adjacent precipice, and throwing them over the height, they were dashed to pieces on the ground. As for the remainder, he cut off their heads with one of their own swords, and left them where they lay. This done, there was much rejoicing among the people at the act of vengeance inflicted, and we all returned to the city the way we came, joyfully laden, myself and all the other animals, with articles of gold and other treasure found and dug up in the secret recesses of the cave. Tlepolemus, immediately on his return home, delivered over all the treasures taken from the robbers into the public treasury, and his marriage with the damsel, his

bride, whom he had retrieved, was solemnised under all the formalities of the law.

From the time when the damsel was married and became a matron she bore me in continual remembrance, took all possible care of me, and always called me her preserver. But, alas! though by her own particular order, even on the very day of her nuptials, my manger was filled to the brim with barley, and hay enough to satisfy the hunger of a Bactrian camel* laid before me, nevertheless, when I saw the pampered dogs, with distended paunches, bearing in their mouths the remains of a delicious supper, dire indeed were my imprecations against Fotis, not only for having transformed me into an ass, but for not having, instead of an ass, made me a dog. The young bride, on the day after her marriage, was not less mindful of me than the day preceding. Quite the contrary; she failed not to explain to her parents and her husband the obligations she owed me, and they in consequence not only communicated together themselves, but consulted several grave people, their acquaintance, as to the manner in which they could best award me an honourable retirement. Some were for having me shut up idle in the stable, continually provided with as much beans or vetches, with chopped barley straw, as I was able to devour. Others, with more regard to my liberty, proposed to send me into the country, to be turned loose

* The dromedary.—Plin., viii. 18.

among the herds of horses, where, with full leave to range freely and sport about in the open fields, I might reward the masters of the mares with a noble progeny of mules, my descendants. Finally, the latter plan was determined on, and the master of the stud of horses being summoned accordingly, very particular instructions, and a strict charge in my behalf, were given him, and I was led away.

The place of my destination was at some distance from the city: however, I stepped gaily forward under the joyful anticipation of renouncing all manner of burdens for the remainder of my life, and of galloping about in perfect liberty, at least till the return of spring. When, thought I, "so soon as the green tender grass begins to shoot in the meadows, there will be roses* in abundance." And I was further exhilarated by contrasting in my mind the honours, which even under the form of an ass I was now receiving, with the much greater and more substantial benefits, that, when I recovered my shape and once more became a man, I concluded would be heaped upon me. But alas, in spite of all such pleasing hopes I was doomed to bitter disappointment, and so far from enjoying all the present delights I had calculated upon, was even deprived of my liberty. I had no sooner arrived at the house of the master of the stud, than his wife, a most avaricious wicked woman, considering that I was now a great way from

* See pp. 93, 101.

the city, and far removed from my patrons, instead of bestowing upon me the good food and kind attendance that had been decreed me, put me into a mill, and there wrought the bread for herself and all her family out of my very hide. Not only did she compel me to labour hard in her own service, threshing me continually all day with a knotted stick, but extracted still further profit out of my circular revolutions, by grinding the corn of her neighbours for a mercenary remuneration. Nay, wretched creature that I was, notwithstanding the severe labour I performed, she did not even give me the food that her husband allotted to me: but when he served her out my barley, she drove me round and round till I had bruised and crushed it, and then, selling it to the neighbouring peasants, laid before me late in the evening, after I had been straining all day at the toilsome machine, unsifted bran, containing abundance of gritty earth and gravel stones.

At last the egregious master of the stud of horses, a tardy listener to the commands of his lord, perhaps in order that at some future day I might, as they say, glory in the reward of my prowess abroad as at home, consigned me, as he had been told to do at first, to the companionship, so long postponed, of the herd of horses at pasture. But Fortune had, even now, cruel torments in store for me. For notwithstanding I had at length gained for a time perfect liberty, and though now so broken down in spirit and in strength, from the troubles

I had undergone, that I could scarcely lift one leg after another in a trot, was fully desirous, as a frisky capering jackass ought, of ingratiating myself in a becoming manner with the female leaders of equine society,—yet when I began gently prancing and making other suitable demonstrations of my gallantry, my proceedings had well nigh brought upon me utter destruction. For the horses, terrible creatures always, but now pampered and in tip top condition, setting at defiance the laws of Jupiter Hospitalis, and burning with jealousy against me as a rival, instantly made me the victim of unanimous persecution. One flinging his head and crest up into the air, and displaying on high his broad chest, pummelled me, like a pugilist, with his fore hoofs. Another suddenly wheeling round, and turning his broad, brawny, fat chine towards me, let fly at me with his hind ones. A third, laying back his ears, with a malignant squeak, and discovering an armory of white teeth, bit me in all parts of my body. In short, I was under such peril and trouble among them all, that I remembered the history I had read of the savage man eating horses * of a king of Thrace, who, powerful tyrant though he was, was mightily saving of his barley, and exposed his miserable guests to be lacerated and devoured by the voracious animals. Indeed, my enemies so worried and distracted me by their continual assaults that I would willingly have

* *Vide* the Emperor's Cup won at Ascot, June, 1850, by the Earl of Eglinton.

returned to the place whence I came, the roundabout in the mill.

I did not however now remain long at pasture in the fields, for my evil destiny, ever insatiable in providing me with fresh torments, ordained that I should be removed from my present companions, and though not actually sent back to the mill, be afflicted with a new and no less grievance. I was now every day employed to bring in from the mountains, loads of wood, with a boy appointed for my driver, who, taking him for all in all, was one of the most mischievous, villainous rascals that ever existed. The mountain where I travelled up and down was exceedingly steep, and of great altitude, though it was not of fatigue or of the frequency of the stumps of trees and large stones that bruised my hoofs that I had so much to complain, as of the incessant blows of the stick with which he was for ever beating me. Invariably striking on the same identical spot on my off haunch, he soon produced a deep ulcerous cavity beneath the fractured skin, at which, and nowhere else, he always relentlessly hammered, as if he were knocking at a door or a window, till the thrilling acuteness of pain from the gory wound shot through my very marrow. Then the quantity of wood he put upon my back; why, gentle reader, thou wouldst have said, hadst thou seen it, 'twere a fitter load for an elephant than a jackass! Yet, notwithstanding, whenever the grievous pile happened to preponderate on the right or on the left, and assuredly he

ought to have altogether relieved me from a few billets on the heavier side, or at least, after removing them, placed them on the lighter side, and so restoring the equilibrium lessen the pressure on my back; he invariably did no such thing. On the contrary, taking heavy stones up out of the road, he used to heap them on the lighter side till he remedied the inequality. Neither did my sufferings under my ill arranged, immoderate burden, content him; but on every occasion when we crossed a river that lay in our way, although the weight of the wood was so great that I was nearly overpowered already, he would add to it the weight of his own small body, and forsooth to keep his feet from being wetted with the water, would jump up upon my loins, and sit there behind the load. Nay, more; this egregious ass driver, if ever, happening to make a false step on the brow of a bank owing to the slipperiness of the clay, I fell down and was prevented from rising immediately by the weight upon my back, when he ought to have given me assistance by supporting me with the halter, lifting me by the tail, or removing some of my load till I got on my legs again, did nothing at all to help me, however I might be fatigued. On the contrary, beginning at my head, or to speak more properly, at my ears, he belaboured me with a thick stick all over my body, till smarting with blows that stripped the hair from my sides, and fell thickly in a shower on my wounds in lieu of fomentations, I was compelled to rise again by struggling and a more than natural effort.

On one occasion this same boy practised upon me a singular piece of cruelty. He got a parcel of thorny bushes, of which the thorns were remarkably sharp and venomous, and fastening all together in a bundle, with a band of flexible twigs, he then, on purpose to put me to the torture, tied them under my tail. Consequently the misery that I endured was twofold; for the thorns put me to severe pain, even when I walked gently along, but if, endeavouring to escape the punishment, I increased my pace, becoming agitated by the motion they wounded me still more grievously. If, on the contrary, I hung back in order to lessen my suffering, the infamous urchin immediately fell upon me with his stick and forced me into a trot. In short, it seemed his sole object to be the death of me one way or other, and that object I heard him more than once swear he would accomplish.

A little while after the above circumstance I had evident reason to be assured that his detestable malice was at all events stimulating him to commit more and more grievous outrages towards me, and particularly one day, he so exhausted my patience by his unbearable insolence that I flung out both my hinder feet at him with my utmost force. Then he contrived the following terrible plot for my destruction. He hastily bound together with cords a quantity of hemp sufficient to make a good load, and placing it on my back drove me along the road. At the first house we came to he stole a live coal out of the fire and buried it in the

middle of the heap in such a manner that the fire, gradually nourished by the motion, lay dormant for a considerable period, till finally, becoming hotter and hotter by gentle degrees, it flared up all at once into a flame, and in a moment I was in a terrific blaze. Whither could I fly for refuge or relief from the burning pestilence? My chance of deliverance seemed hopeless; neither was the midst of a fiery furnace a suitable place for deliberation. Fortune notwithstanding on the present occasion, whether or not merely for the sake of exposing me to other perils in future I will not say, viewed me at all events with a kindlier countenance than she had been used to do, and saved me from the instant death threatened by the fatal contrivance. Perceiving all of a sudden close by, on the side of the road, a pool or receptacle of the mountain streams, that a quantity of rain that had fallen the preceding day had swollen to a considerable depth, at once, without a moment's hesitation, I plunged into it over head and ears, and made such a violent effort in doing so, that I not only succeeded in effectually extinguishing the fire, but ridded myself of every particle of my load into the bargain. Then I immediately walked out again most happily freed from both evils together.

But the audacious boy, notwithstanding his own wicked doings were the cause of the loss of the load, laid the entire blame upon me, and told the shepherds and herdsmen "that I had set the hemp in a flame on

purpose, by wilfully throwing myself down upon the fire as I was passing one of the houses;" therefore added he laughing, "Why should we any longer be at the pains to feed such a salamander?"

Nor was the last cruel manœuvre the worst of the various schemes he meditated against me. A few days after the above occurrence, as I was being driven down the mountain with a load of wood as usual, he sold the load on my back to one of the cottagers on the way, and then leading me home unladen said I had grown so vicious he was unable to manage me; and thus for the purpose of renouncing his miserable authority he pretended to grumble. "That lazy beast," said he, "well may you look at him, is indeed a jackass! Aye, too much of the jackass is in him. Why, he kicks the load from off his back whenever he takes a fancy, and runs at me open mouthed as if about to devour me. In like manner the people who travel along the road are assailed by him, their clothes torn, and themselves grievously terrified. Wherefore I am sadly apprehensive on my own account, lest peradventure I myself be brought to punishment, owing to his truculent behaviour." Thus did my driver continue to impeach my harmless character, and tell such outrageous lies of me, that deprivation of the faculty of speech in reply was rendered vehemently painful. At last he so far succeeded in stimulating the minds of the shepherds to my destruction, that said one, "'twere well to put an end at once to such an ungainly brute,"

and "harkye boy," added he, "I'll tell thee what thou shalt do with him—cut his throat, throw his entrails to the dogs, preserve his flesh for the labourers' supper, and then we will sprinkle the hide with ashes, and tell our master, what he will readily believe, that a wolf killed him."

The moment I heard the latter proposal I gave up all hope, and thought my fate was decided; the more so as my inveterate accuser immediately began to whet his knife upon a whetstone, insulting me all the time under my cruel misfortunes. But while, with a countenance joyful from revenge, remembering the kick I gave him a few days before, which, by Hercules, I was truly sorry did not kill him outright, he was thus preparing to perform the part of rural executioner of my sentence, one of the rustics among the crowd suddenly burst forth in an exclamation—"What!" said he, "is it only because the ass hath vicious tricks that you are about to kill him? 'tis a shame to lose the service of so good a brute for such a matter! why, were he the most ferocious horse in existence,—if you have a mind to believe what I tell ye, and will allow me time to go to the market yonder on an affair of business, and afterwards return home, to fetch a set of hobbles for his legs,—I warrant you, I will speedily make him harmless as a sheep, and fit for carrying burdens, or any other sort of work."

Although by the above transmutation of my sentence I was rescued, at least for the present, from the hands

of Pluto, yet finding myself still doomed to further trouble, I began to reflect upon the means of ending my own existence; and finally I determined, rather than submit to more ill usage, that I would find a way to accomplish my death one way or another, and so preserve my body whole and sound, at all events. The next morning, while I was turning over in my mind whether I should throw myself over a precipice, or, by abstaining totally from food, should starve myself to death, or how I should proceed to fulfil my object otherwise, the boy, my tormentor, notwithstanding all that had happened, drove me up the mountain by our usual route. When we arrived on the summit of the acclivity, the boy diverged a little way from the road among the trees and bushes, in order to cut the wood with his axe, previous to putting the load on my back and bringing it home, leaving me tied up to a large pendulous branch of an oak tree. But, lo and behold, hardly had he got out of sight, when, all of a sudden, I perceived the enormous head of a great she bear, stealthily creeping out of a hole of the rock close by. Dreadfully startled at the unexpected apparition, I flung up my head, reared upright, and throwing the entire weight of my body on my haunches, snapped my halter asunder, and immediately galloped away as fast as my legs could carry me. Rapidly borne along by the force of my hoofs down the steep, and stretching forward my body till every muscle was strained to the utmost, my speed was increased not only by my terror

of the terrible bear, but from the desire to escape what was even worse than the bear itself, the cruel boy. Thus I continued recklessly to gallop on, till I reached the plains in the valley that spread itself out at the foot of the mountain, and then so soon as I found myself below upon the flat, slackened my pace.

I had now proceeded gently a little way, when a certain traveller who happened to be going along the road on foot, perceiving me wandering about alone without a master, took an opportunity to catch hold of me, and then immediately leaping on my back, he began to beat me with the walking stick he carried in his hand. However, as the direction he required me to proceed in was along a blind path that diverged from the road, and, as I considered, gave me the means of escaping, as it were, from the hands of the butcher, I went that way very willingly. As regarded the blows of the stick, since I had lately been used to be beaten with much heavier sticks than his, I cared little about the matter. But the same pervicacious Fortune that had ever invariably thwarted me in all my endeavours, now also laid fresh snares in my path, and, bestirring herself with cruel celerity, deprived me of the chance of deliverance that seemed opportunely about to provide me with a place of concealment. For, by an unlucky coincidence, the master of the stud of horses, my late possessor, having lost a heifer, and despatched several of his labouring servants in quest of it, the men, after following the pursuit through the

adjoining parishes, fortuitously came upon us at the very moment above referred to. Recognizing me immediately, one of them, without more ado, seized me by the halter, and while my new rider continued to sit on my back, proceeded to drag me along in a direction different to that we were going. The stranger meanwhile offered a stout resistance to their efforts, and calling all the Gods to witness the outrage, "What right have you to treat me thus violently?" said he. "Why pull ye at my ass's halter? Wherefore commit this assault upon me?"

"Commit this assault upon thee?" replied they. "What, dost thou, who hast stolen our ass, talk of our assaulting thee while thou art in the act of riding him away? Why, thou hast met with too civil treatment for the like of thee. Truly, instead of complaining of our treatment, 'twere better to tell us of the ass's driver; for doubtless thou hast killed the boy, and hidden his body somewhere."

With that they pulled him off my back, and threw him on the ground, and when they had got him down they began to beat him with their fists, and bruise him with their heels. Notwithstanding he protested all the time most earnestly and swore by all that was sacred that he had seen no driver, but, catching me while I was running away quite alone, without an owner, was merely in hopes of procuring a just reward for restoring me to my proprietor. "And oh, if the ass, which I wish I had never set eyes on, could but

speak, and bear me witness," said he, "you would be sorry for the injury you are doing to an innocent man."

All these asseverations produced no effect whatever upon the minds of people so troublesome to deal with as the shepherds, but, seizing the stranger by the collar, they dragged him along with them up the side of the mountain, to the spot on the summit overgrown with trees, where the boy had been in the habit always of cutting his wood. When they had arrived there, they searched about the place for a considerable time without finding any traces of the boy they were looking for; but at last they discovered the remains of a human body, torn limb from limb, which, on examination, evidently proved to be the body of my late driver. By Hercules! I knew at once that the teeth of the bear had done the business; and had the gift of speech been allowed me for a moment, would have said so at once. But, silent from necessity, all I could in silence I performed notwithstanding: I rejoiced from the bottom of my heart at the tardy act of vengeance. And now, as the body was scattered in various places about the ground, the shepherds having collected all the fragments they could find, and laid them together with difficulty in the best order they were able, they buried it in the earth. Which done, they securely bound the limbs of my Bellerophon, placed him again on my back, and drove me to their village, in order not only to lay their information against him

as a stealer of cattle, but to bring him to condign punishment for having been unquestionably the cruel murderer of the boy.

The morning after we arrived at the village, the culprit was about to be taken before the magistrates, as had been determined on, and the dead boy's parents were shedding tears incessantly and making a violent clamour with their lamentations, when the countryman who had promised to exercise his skill at the expense of my sufferings arrived with the hobbles for my feet, true to his appointment. So soon as the parents perceived the latter personage, said one of them, "Truly we cannot trouble ourselves in our present condition, neither hath our loss aught to do with thee or thy errand. Abide thee therefore here until to-morrow, and then, forsooth, provided thou art so disposed, we and all the rest of us will help thee to serve the ass as thou wilt,—aye, cut its cursed head off."

Thus did it happen that my sentence was postponed for one more day. Thanks to the goodness of the boy, who, at least, after he was dead and for the space of one short day, preserved me from the hands of the executioner. Short, however, as it turned out, was the period during which I was able to congratulate myself on the enjoyment of tranquillity; for while I was quietly standing in my stable, the mother of the boy, dressed in black, her head sprinkled with ashes, and tearing out her grey hair by the roots with both her hands, suddenly burst open the door, and making

a violent noise by crying and sobbing and bewailing the loss of her son, she thus addressed me in a loud screaming voice, beating her bosom all the while :—

"Look at him," said she, beginning to speak the instant she stepped over the threshold. "Aye, look at him! Eating, for ever eating! Hanging over his manger in perfect security; thinking of nothing at all but filling his profound, insatiable belly! What hath he but his own voracious appetite to provide for? What careth he for his deceased master's melancholy fate? What trouble hath he in my sorrow? What! Doth he hold in contempt my age and my sex's weakness, and think, after the crime he hath committed, to escape with impunity? Or doth he actually presume himself innocent? Truly the presumption of innocence and security contrary to the dictates of an evil conscience is compatible with the most wicked of enterprises. But by my faith in all the gods, thou most infamous of quadrupeds, even hadst thou the power of speech given thee for the purpose, thou wouldst not be able to persuade me; no, nor the most simple being on earth, that thou thyself art not to blame for the atrocious deed that hath been committed. Couldst thou not have defended my wretched boy with thy teeth? Couldst thou not have battled for him with thy fore feet? Ah, no! Thou couldst not save at the point of death him whom thou thyself wert ready and nimble enough many times to fling thy heels at. Nay, thou that couldst have taken him

on thy back and rescued him from the gory grasp of the robber, hast on the contrary shaken from off thee, and left deserted and alone, while thou hast fled away by thyself, thy master, thy companion, thy fellow servant, and the friend that fed thee. But I will let thee know, that those who neglect to preserve a fellow subject from death commit a crime '*contra bonos mores*,' punishable by the law. Thou homicide, little reason shalt thou have to rejoice in the death of my child, and speedily shalt thou see that grief hath not deprived me of my natural strength."

The infuriated woman had no sooner pronounced the latter words, than, inserting her hands beneath her robe, she undid her girdle, and with it firmly bound my feet, apart from one another, in such a manner as to deprive me of the power of revenging myself. Then seizing the pole that was used to fasten the stable door, she did not cease to beat me with it till her strength was so utterly exhausted that she could wield the weapon no longer, and it fell from her hands on the ground by its own weight. When she felt herself unable to inflict more blows upon me, complaining of the too sudden weariness of her arms, she ran into the house for a burning firebrand, and thrust it under my tail! And now indeed the ass would have perished like another Meleager, victim of the delirious Althea, simultaneously with the extinction of the burning billet, had not kind nature on the present, as on a former occasion, under a similar emergency, notwith-

standing my legs were firmly bound, and I was otherwise without the means of defence, rendered me opportune assistance in the critical juncture, and enabled me by means of a vehement internal effort to rid myself of my reckless assailant.

BOOK VIII.

Arrival of a Servant of Charity.

Sixth Episode.—*Death of Charity and Tlepolemus.*

Flight of the Master of the Stud of Horses with Lucius and the other Animals — Wolves — A Miraculous Adventure in the Valley — Arrival at Night in a Village.

Seventh Episode.—*Singular Punishment of a Criminal.*

Lucius sold at a Fair — A Religious Impostor — Dancing Priests of the Syrian Goddess — Their Impostures — Hospitably received in a great City — Lucius has a narrow escape of his Life.

The cocks had just begun to crow the next morning, when there arrived at the house of the master of the stud of horses a young man, whom I soon perceived to be one of the servants of the young damsel Charity, the companion of my troubles among the robbers. He was the bearer of a wonderful and tragical account of her death, and of the destruction of her whole household, which sad story, seating himself before the fire, he related to a number of his fellow servants assembled on the spot, in the following terms:—

SIXTH EPISODE.

DEATH OF TLEPOLEMUS AND CHARITY.

Grooms, shepherds, and herdsmen, said the young man, our poor young mistress, Charity, is alas no more! Neither hath she descended to the shades below without a companion. But in order that you may know the circumstances of the dreadful accident, I will relate to you from beginning to end everything as it happened; and then some one among you more learned than myself, some one whom fortune hath gifted with the power of using the pen, may put down the history in a fit manner on paper as it ought to be written.

At a little distance from the place of our abode, in a neighbouring city, there dwelt a youth of the equestrian order. He was of noble birth and sufficiently wealthy; but he haunted taverns, continually drank to excess, fell into the company of bad men and women, and finally becoming the associate of a band of robbers, stained his hands with human blood. His name was Thrasyllus, and his character was such as I have told you. This man, so soon as Charity had come to woman's estate, used all the means in his power to obtain her hand in marriage, and becoming one of her principal suitors, made many and splendid presents to the parents of the young lady. But in spite of all

these presents, and notwithstanding he was of a more illustrious family than any other of his rivals, he suffered the indignity of being rejected in consequence of his bad reputation. Now, when our master's daughter was betrothed to the good Tlepolemus, the thwarted love of Thrasyllus became mingled with indignation at his disappointment; but nevertheless, he still continued to nourish the flame in his bosom, determining to accomplish a terrible and bloody deed on a fit opportunity. Girding himself therefore for the undertaking whenever an occasion should present itself; on the day when, in consequence of the courageous scheme of Tlepolemus, the damsel, escaping from the swords of the robbers, entered her native city, Thrasyllus, among the persons of all descriptions who came forth to meet her, was foremost in his congratulations. Mixing among the crowd with a demeanour apparently more joyful than any of the rest, he testified to both the happy pair his delight at their safety, his good wishes for the prosperity of themselves and their future offspring, and personated to the utmost extent the character of a faithful friend. In short, he concealed his nefarious intentions so thoroughly, and altogether performed his part with such success, that partly on his own account, and partly in consideration of his noble family, he was received among the principal guests into the house of our master.

Now, when admitted to terms of greater intimacy, he became a frequent guest at the table of the young

married people subsequent to their marriage, it naturally happened that in consequence of continual and unreserved conversation, without being himself aware of his own condition, he fell more deeply enamoured than ever. Never, indeed, did it happen otherwise; for the flame of cruel love, delighting in the beginning with a gentle glowing warmth, bursts forth, when cherished by acquaintance, in an immoderate conflagration, and thoroughly overwhelms its victims. For a long time Thrasyllus deliberated with himself the means of procuring a clandestine interview with the object of his passion; but her attendants were numerous and observant, her affection for her husband, increasing day by day, was indissoluble; and her total ignorance in the art of deception would have rendered her perfectly incapable of deceiving him, even had she wished to do so—a thing impossible to be imagined. But in spite of the impossibility, Thrasyllus, in proportion as his infatuation grew stronger and stronger, paying gradually less regard to the difficulties that at the beginning imposed a full restraint upon his ardour, at last considered the obstacles in his way capable of being easily overcome; and instigated by reckless obstinacy, resolved to execute the deed he had in contemplation. And now I will relate to you, and I beseech you listen attentively, how he was hurried forward, by the maddening impulse of his love, to produce the fatal catastrophe.

One day Tlepolemus took Thrasyllus with him as his

companion out hunting—not indeed to search for wild beasts, unless, indeed, there be aught of savage nature in the roebuck; at all events none other horned creature, nor any of the wild animals that have terrible teeth, would Charity ever allow her husband to pursue. However, they left home on the day appointed to amuse themselves in the chase, and had arrived on an elevated spot where was a wood planted with trees, whose wide spreading branches shaded a large surface of ground. In order to start the roebucks in their lairs, the high bred hounds were thrown into this wood, whose circumference the hunters had taken the precaution to block up with nets all round at the various issues into the fields; and no sooner were they in the covert, than with a cunning recollection of their discipline they immediately separated, and spread abroad in such a manner as to surround every avenue. And now behold among the hounds there arose a gentle muttering, and then anon, at a sudden signal from one hound in particular, all together at once burst forth in an impetuous dissonant crash, that overwhelmed all mortal surrounding objects in the general clamour.

But it was not a roebuck, nor timid doe, nor hind, of wild animals the gentlest of all, that had uprisen, but an enormous fat boar—a boar such as with regard to size the like was never seen. Covered with rough hair, his brawny collar splashed with mire, the bristles of his spine erect, foaming at the mouth, gnashing his tusks, and darting threatening glances from his blood-

shot eyes, he came rushing along like a thunderbolt. With the foremost and highest couraged hounds close upon his haunches, casting them to the right and to the left lifeless and wounded from his tusks, he bolted at the obstacle that opposed him, trampled the nets under his feet, and passed clean through at the point of his first assault out into the open field. We of the family of Tlepolemus, perceiving the boar break out of the covert, being unaccustomed to other hunting than of a harmless description, and not provided with arms and implements proper for the emergency, were all seized with a panic, and ran away and hid ourselves behind the trees, or wherever we were able. But the moment had now arrived when Thrasyllus, determining to carry into execution his long designed scheme of treachery, thus in deceitful language addressed Tlepolemus:—"What," said he, "are we to stand here in a state of fear and stupor, and see such a splendid animal as yonder boar escape from us? Are our hands, like those of our cowardly servants, paralysed? Shall we behave ourselves like a couple of timid women? Let us to horse forsooth, and speedily pursue the monster. Here, take a javelin. As for me, I have a spear."

So soon as Thrasyllus had pronounced the above words, without waiting a moment, he and Tlepolemus sprang on their horses, and forthwith urged the animals to their utmost speed in pursuit of the boar. And now the monster, finding his antagonists approaching, conscious of his natural strength, and burning

with ferine rage, first for a few paces slackened his speed, and then turned round to bay. Now did Tlepolemus, while the monster was gnashing his tusks and hesitating which of the hunters to rush at first, wound him with his javelin in the back; but Thrasyllus, sparing the beast, smote the horse that Tlepolemus rode with the edge of his spear, and divided the sinews of his haunches. The quadruped, sinking to the ground on his quarters, and then rolling over on his back in a pool of his own blood, involuntarily unseated his master, whom instantly the raging boar attacked as he lay. Tlepolemus, his clothes torn, and himself wounded by the tusks of the savage animal in several places before he had time to rise, called aloud for assistance to his false friend Thrasyllus; but Thrasyllus, intent on his nefarious enterprise, viewed with unconcern the spectacle of the danger, and instigated by insatiable cruelty, while Tlepolemus was earnestly crying for help, and endeavouring to cover his lacerated legs, drove the point of his spear through and through the right thigh of his companion. Which act he committed, and left him to perish, with the greater confidence, thinking the wound would be attributed to the tusks of the boar. Then he transfixed the body of the animal with his weapon, and despatched him easily.

When Tlepolemus was slain, and the boar lay dead, we, the servants of our master's family, being instantly called from our hiding-places, were overwhelmed with sorrow, and immediately hastened to the spot where

they were. There Thrasyllus, inwardly joyful at the completion of his design, and the prostration of his rival, personated, by the doleful expression of his countenance and otherwise, the appearance of excessive grief, and most affectionately embracing the body that his own hand had turned into a corpse, and mendaciously ascribing the deed to the boar's tusks, imitated the natural, spontaneous sorrow of ourselves, and performed most artfully—save by the shedding of the tears, which refused to flow—all the duties of a mourner.

And now winged Fame, freighted with the news, and about to spread abroad the melancholy tale in various places throughout the land, having first borne it to the house of the deceased Tlepolemus, the unhappy bride, the moment it fell on her ears from the lips of the messenger—alas! never will she hear the like again—started instantly away in a sudden fit of frenzy, and running through the populous streets at a furious rate, as if out of her senses, rushed out of the town like a Bacchante, and pursued her reckless course along the road and fields lamenting her husband's sad fate whithersoever she went after the manner of the insane. The citizens, aroused and alarmed also at the intelligence, instantly sallied forth from their houses, and attracted together simultaneously by grief from opposite directions to meet the coming spectacle, proceeded in numerous different groups, until the whole city was evacuated. At last, behold, there appeared before the eyes of the multitude the dead body of Tlepolemus, and, stretched

prostrate upon the corpse, Charity, so far deprived of sense and motion, that well-nigh had she already rendered up the life devoted to her husband,—that life which now, when dragged away with difficulty by her attendants, she retained unwillingly.

And now when, after a short interval, the funeral procession proceeded to the sepulchre, accompanied by all the inhabitants of the city, the increasing joy of Thrasyllus readily supplied the tears that grief had hitherto refused to yield; he vociferated more loudly, beat his bosom more severely than any of the other mourners, and deceived truth itself by the terms of endearment addressed to the deceased, whom he called "the companion of his boyhood, his comrade, his friend," and then his sorrow would seem to burst forth anew as he added—"his brother." Nay, ever and anon, he would turn towards Charity, take her by the hand to prevent her from striking her bosom; would appear to comfort her; and as if to blunt the poignancy of her despair, would talk to her in eloquent language of the vicissitudes of Fortune,—using, in short, under the cloak of piety, all possible means to improve his intimacy with the bereaved, and adopt the course of behaviour best suited to nourish his detestable love. But at last the mournful obsequies were completed; and so soon as the ceremony was over, Charity, whose only earthly wish was now to go the way of her departed husband, and follow him to the grave, began immediately to use every possible endeavour to effect

her settled purpose. Adopting a slow and gentle method in the beginning, a method calculated without the aid of mortal weapon to merge the senses in the placid sleep of Death, she refused all manner of sustenance, and shutting herself up in her chamber, with dishevelled hair, disordered dress, and in total darkness, would there have relinquished both light and life together, had not Thrasyllus, through her parents, attendants, and the friends of the family, succeeded, by unceasing perseverance, in prevailing upon her to abandon her determination. Yet it being a rigid exercise of duty, against her own inclination, and a sense of religious veneration towards her parents, that caused her to succumb, she resumed—with a countenance, indeed, somewhat more serene, but with a heart not less deeply immersed in sorrow—the offices of the living. Her limbs, already in a state of almost deadly collapse, were refreshed in the bath, and she took some nourishment.

But Despair, overspreading her bosom, devoured her spirit and her strength, while her regrets, lasting both night and day, were slowly consuming her vitals. Gazing continually on a picture of her deceased husband, that, painted in the costume of Bacchus, she treated with divine honours for the sake of consolation, the spectacle was itself a torture. Yet did Thrasyllus, instigated by his reckless, headlong spirit, before tears had drained the sources of her misery, before the furious agitation of her wounded heart had subsided, before inveterate grief, grown old,

had perished from the length of its duration,—while still she was bewailing her lost husband, still rending her garments and still tearing her hair,—audaciously declare the secret of his heart, disclose his ineffable treachery, and venture to offer marriage. Charity shuddered at the sound of a voice she detested and abhorred. The avowal came upon her like the blast of a malignant planet or a clap of thunder. A cloud enveloped her senses, and as if struck by the red bolt of Jupiter, she fell to the ground motionless.

Awakening at last from a long protracted swoon with a piercing scream, and relapsing at frequent intervals to a state of unconsciousness, it was not till after the lapse of some days while she continued occasionally to utter wild and lamentable cries, that, as her reason gradually recovered its sway by slow degrees, the scene that had passed with Thrasyllus became revived in her recollection. Deliberating with herself as to the steps that in prudence she ought to pursue, having referred the proposal of Thrasyllus to the consideration of her parents, and having appealed to their acute wisdom for counsel in her dilemma, she retired to rest one night in a state of grievous agitation, and had scarcely closed her eyes when suddenly the ghost of the miserably murdered Tlepolemus stood in the presence of his faithful widow. And thus, slowly raising the head that reclined on its bosom and disclosing its pallid blood-stained features to the view of Charity, the apparition addressed her:—

"Oh, my wife! and wife none else can call thee, while the memory of thy spouse hold a place in thy bosom—if time obliterate the remembrance of the bonds of our mutual affection broken by my calamitous death—wed happily whomsoever thou wilt, — save Thrasyllus. Neither recline at his table nor give him thy conversation. Bestow not thy sanction on the nuptials, nor share the bed of a fratricide. Beware lest thou fall into the sacrilegious blood-stained hands of Thrasyllus — thy husband's murderer! The wound whence thy tears washed away the blood, the wound that hath made me an alien to thee, not the tusk of the boar, but the spear of Thrasyllus inflicted." The ghost having pronounced the above words, and others in addition that fully enlightened the mind of Charity as to all the circumstances of the nefarious crime, then immediately disappeared, and Charity vainly endeavoured to compose herself to sleep; but alas, while her face pressed the pillow, and the flowing tears wetted her beautiful cheeks, whenever, after a bitter period of sorrow, she began to close her eyes, starting up in sudden agony, and all her wretchedness bursting forth anew, she would tear her night-dress, beat her lovely arms with the palms of her hands, and scream aloud.

And now days and nights had passed away, and Charity, burying in the depths of her own bosom the secret of the murder, had revealed to no living mortal the story of her husband's apparition; when at last she determined in silence to be rid of her unhappy life, and

to punish the wicked murderer. Accordingly when again, after a considerable interval, the detested suitor appeared in her presence to renew his proposals, and pour forth protestations on her deafened ears; assuming with wonderful subtilty an air of courteous clemency, as if she would at once encourage and postpone his suit, she interrupted his anxious and submissive entreaties by thus addressing him:—"Alas!" said she, "the fair countenance of my dearest husband is still before my eyes. Still through my nostrils do I inhale the perfume of his wedding garments—still is Tlepolemus, the figure of the beautiful Tlepolemus, alive in my bosom. Well therefore wilt thou consult thine own interests, nay, minister to thy safety, wert thou to allow a wretched woman sufficient time to expend her grief. Wait until the whole period of a year, from the day of the funeral, be completed, not only because the delay be required from regard to decency, but lest, peradventure, by a premature marriage, the indignation of my husband's manes be aroused against us."

The promise conveyed by the above words of Charity by no means pacified Thrasyllus, nor brought his mind to reason. On the contrary, he reiterated his entreaties more violently than ever, and persisted to wound her heart by obstinate perseverance. At last Charity feeling herself compelled to dissemble still farther, pretended to be overcome, and thus addressed her persecutor:—"Well then, Thrasyllus, since it were impossible not to yield to thy request, I will consent to marry

thee on condition that the ceremony of our nuptials be performed in private, and that our marriage remain profoundly secret until the period of a year." Thrasyllus, completely deceived, agreed to the clandestine arrangement without hesitation, while Charity proceeded as follows:—"My nurse," said she, "shall be my confidante. On the evening of to-morrow disguise thyself, and wait patiently till the first watch of the night. Then come, but come alone, into the street overlooked by my nurse's apartment. There remain, and a signal shall be given thee from the window. At the sound of a single whistle be in readiness, for then shall she admit thee to our dwelling, and lead thee to a place of concealment where thou wilt remain till morning."

Thrasyllus, overwhelmed with fatal joy at the expectation of his nuptials, passed the whole of the next day in turbid impatience, and so soon as the sun had sunk upon the horizon betook himself disguised, as he had been directed, to the street in front of the nurse's apartment. There querulously lamenting the tardy lapse of time, while he waited the appointed signal—at last, at the sound of the whistle, as agreed upon, Thrasyllus, elated with hope and confidence, and void of all manner of suspicion, was led by the crafty old woman into her own apartment; where following implicitly the directions received from her mistress, she received him with soft and flattering words, and provided for his entertainment with an air of profound secrecy. Ac-

cordingly, while she pretended to lament the protracted arrival of her mistress, producing a flagon of wine and wine cups, which she said she had prepared on purpose, she easily prevailed upon Thrasyllus to avail himself of the intoxicating contents of the vessel. Meanwhile, like a parent hanging over the couch of a sick child, anxiously stimulating him to repeat the beverage, the soporiferous drug infused in the liquor, of which he swallowed copious draughts not unwillingly, produced its dire effect, and Thrasyllus, overwhelmed with profound sleep, lay helplessly stretched on his back in a senseless state of lethargy.

Then did the nurse immediately betake herself to the apartment of her mistress Charity, and Charity, prompt to the summons of her attendant, hurried speedily to the spot where Thrasyllus lay. Standing over the assassin, her mind wrought to a pitch of masculine courage, and her lips quivering with rage, she thus addressed him:—"What? Faithful friend of my Tlepolemus! egregious hunter! tender husband,—as fain thou wouldst have been, of mine own!—is it thus with thee at last? Lo, there the right hand that shed blood dear to me! There yon bosom, the source of treacherous plots for my destruction! There the eyes, that to my sorrow I delighted, now with prophetic foresight of their destiny closed in darkness! Sleep on, Thrasyllus! Indulge in security thy dreams of joy! Neither shall sword nor spear harm thee! Ah, no; the heavenly powers forbid. For then, at least in the

manner of thy death, wouldst thou resemble my Tlepolemus. Dream on, Thrasyllus! Nought ever more, save when thou dreamest, shall those eyes behold! Thyself shall live, but thine eyes by this hand shall perish! Thy days shall be sightless, and the miserable death of my Tlepolemus happiness to thy life hereafter! Never, no never, wilt thou revel in thy expected nuptials! Deprived of mortal pleasures, without a friendly hand to lead thee, Charity shall be far, far away from thee! Neither shall the repose of death comfort thee; but like a shadowy phantom 'twixt the light of the sun and Tartarus shalt thou be a helpless wanderer! Nay, and to sharpen the sting of thy misery thou shalt live in ignorance of thine enemy. Long and vainly shalt thou seek to know the hand that smote thine eyeballs. The blood of thine eyeballs pierced by these sacred hands shall be a libation on the sepulchre of my Tlepolemus, and propitiate his manes! But wherefore delay? The hand now lifted like a pestilence o'er thee is thine in imagination. Why then defer thy torture? Upraise thy vacant countenance to comprehend thine own misfortune, to compute the compass of thy wretchedness! Rouse thee, I say, from the shades of somnolency to blacker penal darkness. Thus will I wreak my vengeance by thy agony. Thus shall thine eyes delight the senses of a virtuous wife. Thus shall the torch of Hymen illuminate thy nuptials. Blindness shall be thy bride; the Furies thy bridemaids, and their whips, perpetually stinging thee, thine own conscience."

When Charity had pronounced the above words in a tone of enthusiasm, nearly amounting to divine inspiration, she immediately drew out the long pin that transfixed her hair, and darted it into both the eyeballs of Thrasyllus; then seizing a naked sword, the sword that Tlepolemus used to wear, she rushed out of the house, and hurried through the streets at an accelerated pace, evidently meditating some dire catastrophe. Meanwhile Thrasyllus, writhing in bitter agony, started, stone blind and in a state of unconsciousness, from crapulous lethargic sleep, and as Charity pursued her reckless course straight to the tomb of her husband, we the servants of her house and many of the citizens, who hastened from their houses on the alarm, vied with one another in eagerness to follow and wrest the weapon from the hands of the infuriated damsel. Nevertheless, in spite of our endeavours, Charity succeeded in reaching the destined spot, and, having arrived there, speedily assumed her post at the head of Tlepolemus's sepulchre. When she had remained for a little while listening to the abundant expressions of grief and attachment uttered by all around her, and waving the gleaming blade of the sword in order to prevent the people from approaching, she thus addressed the multitude :—

" No more of tears, oh citizens! No more of grief —of grief ill suited to my desperate resolve. The cruel murder of my husband I have vindicated. The fell destroyer of my nuptials I have punished. Now

with this sword will I seek the shades below, and go to my Tlepolemus."

So saying, and having farther related to the people in due order everything relating to the appearance of the ghost, and the stratagem she had had recourse to in order to inveigle Thrasyllus, she instantly stabbed herself underneath the right breast with such force that the sword went through and through her body. Falling to the ground bathed in her blood, muttering a few unintelligible words and courageous to the last gasp, she breathed forth her ardent spirit.

The body of the unfortunate wife having been hastily washed, and placed by her attendants in the same tomb with her husband, Thrasyllus, when sufficiently recovered to know what had happened, conscious that death inflicted by the point of the sword was, for a crime such as he had committed, an inadequate punishment, immediately caused himself to be led to the sepulchre of Tlepolemus. When he had arrived there, he desired the doors to be opened, which done, he entered within, and then having exclaimed several times successively, "Manes of the injured dead, behold your willing victim," he requested the aperture to be closed upon him with solid masonry. There, accordingly, condemned by his own sentence, he perished of starvation.

END OF SIXTH EPISODE.

The servant of Charity having concluded his melancholy tale, heaved a deep sigh, while his rustic hearers, who had listened to the misfortunes that had befallen the house of their patron with intense interest and sympathy from beginning to end, showed manifest and vehement tokens of commiseration. Indeed, they felt so strongly on the occasion that, influenced by the consequences likely to accrue to themselves from the sad occurrence, and particularly from the apprehension of being handed over to a new master, they immediately made up their minds to take flight from the place where they were, and seek another domicile. Among them all, the master of the stud of horses, who had so faithfully fulfilled his obligation towards me after I was committed to his care, was first and foremost in making preparations for a hasty departure, and diligently employed himself running about all over the little cottage he lived in, in order to collect from his secret hoards and get ready for moving everything he had that was valuable. All which things being placed on the backs of myself and the other beasts of burden, we then forthwith departed from the ancient place of his habitation, laden besides with women, children, geese, chickens, kids, and even little puppy dogs. In short, our feet were made to serve the purpose of feet for every living thing incapable of keeping pace with us. For my own part, though the load I was obliged to carry was enormous, I made light of my burden; and considering that I was es-

caping from the destiny awarded me by the savage peasant, stepped forward with alacrity.

On leaving the house the road we travelled was exceedingly rough, leading by a steep acclivity to the summit of a mountain covered with trees, and when we had arrived there, with toilsome labour, we descended into the plain below among open fields. We then proceeded along the valley till the evening, and as the shades of night were beginning to darken our path, we arrived at a certain castle. This castle belonged to a rich inhabitant, who had a numerous household, all of whom unanimously pressed us to remain there for the night, in consequence of the number of ferocious wolves of enormous size that infested the neighbourhood. "They ravaged the country to such a degree," they said, "that all locomotive communication was put a stop to. They fell upon travellers on the roads in packs, like a troop of banditti, destroyed the defenceless cattle in the fields, and occasionally, when instigated by hunger, even attacked people within the precincts of the villages and farm-houses. Nowhere in the vicinity," they added, "was human life secure from danger from the terrible animals. Especially along the road we were about to travel the ground was white with human bones that lay blanching in the sun, and half-eaten disembowelled carcases were scattered about everywhere. Not only, therefore, must we pursue our journey at all events with extreme caution, avoiding by all means the dusk, and waiting for broad

daylight, with a clear hot sun, but, placing no confidence on the debilitating effect of the noontide heat on the creatures, move in a compact body like the figure of a wedge, and, above all things, prevent our party from straggling.

From the above considerations we were induced to remain for the night at the castle; but yet, notwithstanding, the infamous fugitive leaders of our people, afraid of being pursued and stimulated by rash impatience to pursue their journey, put the loads on all our backs at the third watch of the night, and drove us out again into the road before daylight. For my own part, aware of our danger with regard to the wolves, and anxious to preserve my haunches from the attacks of those animals, I thrust myself as nearly as I was able into the middle of the throng among the other beasts of burden, even pushing on ahead before several of the horses, and continued to walk on with such a light nimble step that I gained general admiration. My lively gait, however, proceeded not from alacrity of spirit, but on the contrary from fear; though I consoled myself not a little by reflecting that fear perhaps caused the most celebrated of horses, Pegasus, to leap all the higher when, panic-struck at the teeth of the fire-vomiting Chimera, he made a wonderful spring up into the air that carried him clean to the celestial regions, and acquired for him his poetic reputation. I was also farther comforted, by perceiving that the shepherds by whom we were accompanied had taken the

precaution of bringing with them all sorts of offensive weapons; indeed, they appeared as if regularly armed for battle: carrying one a spear, another a hunting javelin, a third a number of darts, a fourth a long pole or a cudgel, a fifth a sharp pointed stake, borne perpendicularly, &c. In addition to all which implements we were everywhere abundantly supplied with big stones along the rough road we were travelling. Besides, we had the advantage of lighted torches for the purpose of frightening away our savage antagonists, and actually required nothing but a trumpet to convert our little troop into a regular army.

Nevertheless, after all these preparations, whether the wolves were scared by the noise and shouting continually kept up by our party and by the flaming light of the torches, or whether that night they happened to be marauding in some other direction, not a single wolf came near us, nor did we even so much as see one at a distance. But on the other hand, though our fears in that respect were vain, the very means we adopted to preserve ourselves from the assaults of wild beasts brought us into serious difficulties of another description. For as we were passing one of the farm-houses along the road, the husbandmen belonging to it being particularly careful of their property, and withal great cowards, mistaking our numerous assemblage for a band of robbers, let loose a great number of savage dogs upon us. Large in size, exceedingly ferocious, well trained to guard the flocks, obedient to the voice of their

masters, and equal in strength to cope with the fiercest bear or wolf, they came rushing upon us exasperated by cheers and hallooing, and spreading themselves in all directions, leaped upon and lacerated both men and animals alike most grievously. During a considerable period that the assault lasted, reader, you might have seen a spectacle, by Hercules, more pitiable than memorable: many men dragged forthwith to the ground, and others, although running away, seized by the enraged dogs, thrown prostrate, held down, worried, and severely torn. While, in addition to our calamity, we were exposed all the time to another peril from the rustics and country people hurling down large stones upon us from the top of the farm-house and the summit of the adjoining height; nay, the stones fell around us with such rapidity, that it was difficult to say whether the injuries so inflicted or from the dogs were the greater. At last, all of a sudden, a woman, who was sitting on my back, was hit on the head with a stone, and she, crying and screaming from the pain of the blow, began to call out to her husband, one of the shepherds, to help her. With that the shepherd came up to her, and, as he was wiping the blood off his wife's head, he shouted in a loud voice to the assailants, and calling all the gods to witness, thus addressed them:—"Hard hearted wretches that you are," said he, "for what reason do you attack, in this fashion, a number of poor labouring men? What harm have we done to you? What think you we want to rob you of? 'Tis not because you dwell

in rocks and caves, like wild beasts and barbarians, that you thus thirst after our blood!" No sooner had the shepherd made the above exclamation, than the shower of stones immediately ceased, and the dogs also having been simultaneously called off by their masters, the canine tempest subsided. At the same time one of the hostile countrymen, who had climbed to the top of a lofty cypress-tree, replied to the shepherd as follows:— "Neither are we," said he, "desirous of depriving you of aught that you have. 'Twas only because we expected harm from you that we have defended ourselves. Henceforth consider yourselves secure, and depart in peace."

So soon as the peasant had pronounced the latter benediction we set forward without more ado, and continued to make the best of our way for a considerable distance, till we arrived at a spot like a grove, where the ground was planted with tall trees, with plenty of open space underneath, covered with green turf. Here our leaders proposed to rest awhile, not only to refresh ourselves, but have a thorough examination of limbs and bodies; for many were wounded by the bites of the dogs, others by stones, and, one way or other, every living creature was hurt more or less. Accordingly the people threw themselves down on the grass in all directions, and having lain a little while to recover from their fatigue, presently rose up and began to pay attention to their injuries.

And now all were speedily engaged in the same

occupation, each respectively using the best remedy at hand: one, for example, washing away the blood with the water of an adjacent rivulet; another pressing a tumour on his head with a wetted sponge; a third binding up a gaping gash with linen rags, etc.; when as they were all thus employed, some of the shepherds perceived an old man standing on the summit of a hill overhanging the place where we were. As he appeared looking down towards us, and a parcel of goats were feeding round about him, they consequently thought he was a shepherd, and under that impression called to him, and asked "Whether he had any milk or curds to sell?" At first the old man remained silent, and made no other reply to the question than to shake his head, and so he continued to do, when they repeated it several times, till at last, still shaking his head all the while, "How is it possible," said he, "that you can be thinking of food or of drink, or of refreshment of any kind, seated where you are? Know you not the place you are in?"

Having uttered the above words, the old man immediately turned his back upon us, and collecting his flock of goats together retreated a long distance away. The old man's speech, together with the manner in which he went away, excited considerable alarm among our shepherds relative to the locality we were in; and as there was no one present capable of giving any information, they remained a good while in a state of much doubt and difficulty. At last,

while yet they were not knowing what to do, they saw another old man below in the valley come walking along towards us. Though bent with age almost to a horizontal position, and leaning on a stick, he was a man of great stature, and as he approached we perceived that he was shedding tears profusely. When he came close to us, wearily dragging along his feet, one after the other, he addressed himself to some of the young men of our party, weeping still more bitterly than before, and as he embraced their knees, "May Providence and good fortune," said he, "be ever with you. May you, when you reach the term of my years, be strong and happy, so that now you take pity on my grey hairs, and kindly rendering your assistance to one in a state of decrepitude, rescue from the jaws of death my little grandson, the comfort of my declining age. For anon the sweet companion of my journey reaching to catch hold of a sparrow that was singing in yonder low hedge, fell into the ditch underneath, and there lies covered with the bushes. The child, although in fearful peril of his life, I know is still alive; for I heard his voice continually crying to his grandfather for assistance, albeit by reason of my feebleness I was unable to give him succour. Lend then your powerful aid, O ye who are still in the enjoyment of youth and of strength; preserve, I pray you, the child, the inheritor, and the last of kin, of a miserable aged man."

When the old man had ceased to supplicate in this

manner, he tore his white hair, and continued to lament so piteously that the compassion of every man of our party was warmly excited, especially of one not only among the youngest and the strongest, but the bravest of all the rest, who, fortunately, had escaped from the recent affray with the least injury of any body. The latter accordingly springing briskly on his feet in an instant, asked the old man "Where was the ditch into which the little boy had fallen?" and upon being replied to by the old man pointing his finger to some rough bushes a little way off, he proceeded thither, accompanied by the other, without more ado. When they had departed, and while we were waiting their return, the packages were laden on the backs of myself and the other beasts of burden; and the men as well as the animals being now sufficiently refreshed, and everything ready to proceed, they began to call out in order to hasten the return of the young man who had gone away. The young man, however, not returning any answer to the summons, and delaying to make his appearance, our people calling him by his name, shouted louder than before, and after testifying their displeasure in various ways at his protracted absence raised a considerable clamour; and finally, dispatched a messenger to the spot whither he had gone, to acquaint him of the delay he was occasioning, and to accelerate his movements. We had remained a very short time in suspense when the messenger returned to us in a state of excessive agitation, and trembling

violently, with news of his fellow-servant. With a face the colour of a piece of boxwood, he related the following wonderful account of what he had seen:— "When he arrived at the spot," he said, "he saw an enormous serpent coiled round his companion, whose body, as he lay on his back, was already more than half-engulphed in the gullet of the voracious reptile." And he added that, on witnessing the terrible spectacle, looking round for the old man who had accompanied him, the latter was nowhere to be seen.

No sooner had our people heard of the dreadful catastrophe, than, concluding from the first old man's language and behaviour, that the terrible tenant of the vicinity, the serpent, was the very thing he would have warned us against, they drove us away immediately at the top of our pace, beating us continually with their sticks, in order to get out of the pestilential country as soon as possible. Having, therefore, gone over a considerable distance at an unusually quick rate, we soon arrived at the village where we determined to pass the night. The people when we came there were in a state of great commotion, in consequence of an event that had just happened in the neighbourhood; an event which, brief as is the story, I am desirous, reader, of relating for thy benefit.

SEVENTH EPISODE.

SINGULAR PUNISHMENT OF A CRIMINAL.

In the house where we had taken up our quarters, there was a certain man in the family who served in the capacity of bailiff. His wife was living fellow-servant in the house, and his master entrusted him with the charge of his large establishment. This woman became jealous of her husband, in consequence of his falling in love with a freed woman of an adjacent province, and being enraged against him, set fire to and consumed his account books, and every other article that belonged to him. Nor did she stint herself to exercising her fury on his goods, but determined also to destroy herself and her own offspring. Accordingly she tied a noose round her neck, and seizing hold of a child she had borne to her husband, she slipped its head into another noose at the opposite end of the cord, and precipitated herself into a deep well, dragging the miserable innocent appendage along with her to the bottom. When the master of the house heard of the death of the woman and the child, he became mightily indignant; and, satisfied of the reasonableness of her complaint against her husband, he seized the bailiff as the instigator of the woman's crime, and, having had his naked body

first anointed all over with honey, firmly bound him to an ancient fig-tree. Now about the roots of this fig-tree was established in the rotten wood a colony of ants, so numerous that, as the countless myriads came gushing forth from their receptacles, and dispersed themselves here and there abroad in every direction, the very earth about the aperture trembled like boiling water in a cauldron. The tiny insects were no sooner attracted by the sweet smell of the honey, than they spread themselves over the entire surface of the man's living body, and inflicting upon him excruciating agony by their minute but innumerable venomous punctures, they speedily and thoroughly devoured him. They ate both flesh and entrails, leaving nothing remaining save the clean-stripped bones, that, suspended on the fatal tree, hung blanching in the sun.

END OF SEVENTH EPISODE.

Such was the tale we heard related in the village the evening of our arrival, and the next morning, while all the inhabitants were still in a state of much excitement, we left this crime-stricken mansion, and pursued our journey. The whole of that day we travelled through an exceedingly flat country, till we were

very tired, and in the evening we arrived in a large and populous city. In this city the shepherds of our party determined to establish their permanent habitation, not only owing to the nature of the country, that afforded abundance of places of concealment in the neighbourhood, but also on account of the excessive fertility of the soil.

We had already been three days at our new place of abode, during which period myself and the other animals were indulged with perfect rest and fed abundantly, in order to improve our appearance previously to being brought out to be sold, when we were all led forth for that purpose into the market, and delivered over to the crier. The crier then with a loud voice proclaimed the price of each of us separately; and in a short time the horses and all the asses were bought by opulent purchasers, save myself, against whom every one of the people who passed by had something to say in disparagement. Meanwhile I was left standing in a retired spot quite alone, with good reason to dislike the treatment I received from those who, desirous of ascertaining my age by looking at my teeth, were continually handling me. At last I grew out of patience with one man in particular, who, having done so several times before, was now again rubbing his dirty fingers upon my gums; and I bit his hand very severely. No sooner had I performed this justifiable act, than the people, thinking I was a vicious, ferocious animal, were thenceforward afraid of buying me; and all of

them, including even the crier himself—whose voice was rough as if his throat were split asunder—began to crack ridiculous jokes upon me. "What is the use," said the crier, "of trying any longer to sell this old screw of a jackass? His hoofs are foundered,—he is of an ugly colour,—and vicious,—and sluggish,—and even if you kill him, why, the sieve that you make of his hide will only be fit to sift rubbish. Suppose now, gentlemen," continued he, "that is, provided there happen to be among you some one who don't mind throwing away his hay; suppose, I say, we make you a present of him!" And this way he went on for some time, raising a laugh among the surrounding multitude at my expense. At last, my most cruel Fortune—from whom, go whithersoever I would, I had never been able to escape, nor had all my preceding sufferings sufficed to conciliate—once more cast her evil eye upon me, and procured, as it were by a miracle, a purchaser for me. This purchaser, an old man partly bald, whose hair that remained hung in pendulous ringlets, was a person altogether just suited to be the master of an ass in my wretched condition. But, reader, in order to explain the profession of my new master, I must inform you that he was one of those abominable vagrants who wander about from town to town playing upon cymbals and castanets, and carrying with them through the streets an image of the Syrian goddess, whom thus they reduce to the condition of a common beggar, and compel to collect alms from the people.

This personage appeared at all events exceedingly anxious to buy me, and inquiring of the crier whence I came, "This fine strong animal," replied the crier, "was bred in Cappadocia." Next the other asked how old I was; upon which the crier, resuming his tone of raillery, "The mathematician," said he, "who lately cast his nativity, and from his profession is well assured of the fact, pronounces him five years old; he will, at all events, make thee a good faithful servant to do thy work both abroad and at home; nay, I know not whether I may not be rashly selling thee a Roman citizen for a slave, and thereby incur the penalty of the Cornelian law." The odious customer continued still to make a number of interrogations of different sorts concerning me; at last, touching the question of gentleness, "Truly," said the crier, "the creature that you see before you has more of the sheep than the ass in his disposition. Whatever service you require of him 'tis all the same. Neither is he a biter nor a kicker, but so gentle, on the contrary, that well one might imagine he were a sober honest man enveloped in an ass's hide. Nay, if you are not satisfied with what I say, and have a desire to try the patience of the animal, prithee thrust thy head for a moment under his tail." At this latter speech of the crier, the old vagabond, beginning to perceive that the other was making game of him, immediately assumed the air of a person highly indignant, and exclaimed angrily, "What? thou dead and alive old crier, art thou out of thy senses? May

the omnipotent Syrian Goddess, universal parent of all things, may the holy Bacchus, and Bellona, and Cybele, together with our mistress Venus and her Adonis, strike thee blind for thus passing on me thy scurrilous jokes. Thinkest thou to place my goddess on the back of a vicious beast that, if vexed, would kick the divine image off his back, and lay her prostrate on the ground? Vainly, with hair on end, should I wander all over the country for an artificer to repair her." When the customer had pronounced these last words, I, thinking that if I were to show symptoms of a ferocious nature, he would desist from buying me, was just about to give a tremendous jump, and feign a state of rabid madness; but as if anticipating my intention, and at the same time being in truth a ready purchaser, he instantly laid hold of me, and paid at once the price demanded, seventeen denarii, which my master received joyfully. The other then very much to my sorrow immediately handed me over to my new possessor with a rope of twisted rushes tied round my neck instead of a halter.

I was now forthwith led away to the temporary abode of my purchaser, at a place in the neighbourhood not far distant, and, after being tied up to the manger the remaining part of the day and the ensuing night, entered the next day upon my new vocation. Early in the morning the troop of fanatic priests, whose joint property I had now become, sallied forth all together in a body on their daily excursion, and, placing the image of the Syrian goddess on my back, they proceeded from

house to house, collecting general contributions from the people in the country wherever they went. They were preceded by the stoutest man of all the party, who was a skilful player on the horn, and were all dressed in garments of various colours that served to disguise their persons; paint being also plastered over their dirty faces, especially around the eyes. Small saffron-coloured turbans of silk or fine linen covered their heads; about their body, some wore white tunics fastened with a girdle, and ornamented with purple, spear-shaped appendages that fluttered in the wind; and the shoes on their feet were light yellow colour. The whole troop being attired after the above fashion, and the image of the goddess on my back covered with a silken mantle, whenever we arrived at a village or country house the pipers struck up their music, and while these played a Bacchic strain, the others bared their arms to the shoulders, and seizing in their hands each a large sword or an axe, and brandishing the weapons above their heads, began to shout, and dance, and leap like maniacs.

At one large farm-house especially, where we arrived after visiting a few small cottages; there, by reason that the dwelling belonged to a rich proprietor, they made a grand exhibition. Commencing from the instant they entered the premises, they first began to howl and roar discordantly, while they continually ran to and fro, using the most frantic gestures. Then bending down their heads upon their chest, they would

whirl their pendulous locks round and round with a circular motion; and after they had continued to do so for awhile, they tore their flesh with their teeth, and finally wounded their arms with a two-edged sword which they all carried for the purpose. One man in particular, apparently more violently inspired than all the rest, panting incessantly, and gasping from the very bottom of his chest for breath, pretended to be seized with downright madness; and while thus making believe to be replete with the divine spirit, as if it were possible that the gods inflicted on mankind by their presence a noxious instead of a salutary influence, his merit,—and I beg the reader to mark the care of Celestial Providence,—was not permitted to go unrewarded. After he had continued in the above state for a little while, he commenced a loud, mendaciously prophetic address, accusing and upbraiding himself of the commission of some crime contrary to the laws of their holy religion. Then, imprecating punishment for his wickedness, he seized hold of a whip worn by each of them as a characteristic implement of their profession,—a whip formed of hard twisted woollen cord strung with the knuckle-bones of sheep,—and began to lash himself with extraordinary energy. Meanwhile he and all the rest bore the pain with astonishing fortitude, while from the lashes of the whip and the strokes of the swords their blood wetted the ground. Indeed, the spectacle caused me no little anxiety, lest the Syrian goddess, delighting in the spilling of human

blood in such abundance, might by and bye take a fancy, like certain of mankind who have an appetite for ass's milk, to recreate her stomach with an ass's blood. The man, however, who inflicted on himself this cruel chastisement, at intervals when he stopped, as if to rest himself from sheer fatigue, not only received from the bystanders pieces of brass money, but of silver also, all which he carefully stowed away in a capacious pouch in the bosom of his robe; and after he had ceased to whip himself, all the spectators vied with one another in their presents of articles in kind for the general benefit of the Syrian goddess. Accordingly cheeses, flour, meal, milk, a cask of wine, &c., not forgetting some barley for myself the bearer, were poured upon us from various quarters, till the weight of all together had nearly overpowered me. In this manner the priests continued every day to rake greedily together all they could possibly lay hold of, and stuffing every thing into sacks procured for the occasion, these were placed upon my back. During this wandering life, while I served the purpose of a locomotive magazine as well as a temple, they plundered the whole region.

On one day in particular, after returning with an uncommonly rich booty to a castle where they had established their temporary domicile, they determined to have a glorious feast in order to celebrate their success. Accordingly, pretending to have occasion for an animal to sacrifice, they imposed on the credulity

of a countryman, by means of a fictitious oracle proclaimed in his favour, and obtained of him a beautifully fat ram, which they said the Syrian goddess had need of because she was hungry. They roasted the ram for supper, and having all ate most gluttonously began to pledge one another in cups of wine without any moderation. Indeed, their potations were carried to such unlimited excess, and their hypocrisy was so thoroughly exposed during the protracted period of their orgies, that at last, unable to tolerate the scene any longer, I was seized with an uncontrollable inclination to express in audible terms my abomination of the mockery. But alas, notwithstanding that I made a strenuous effort to pronounce emphatically the words "Porro Quirites," I failed at present as I had done before, and without either of the accompanying syllables, nothing but the O, clear and strong in the true asinine tone, issued from my gullet. The moment of the exclamation, however, was the most opportune that could be imagined. For at the very instant there happened to be passing by the building out of doors some young men, who, having sallied forth from their homes that night in quest of an ass lost by a peasant, their neighbour, and already visited, to no purpose, all the inns and places of public resort in hopes of finding it, now concluded, when they heard me bray, that I was the very ass they were in quest of. Thinking therefore that I was purposely concealed in the dwelling, they burst open the doors to seize me as their legitimate

prey, and, though they found not the ass they looked for, they detected the drunken priests in the midst of their bacchanalian proceedings. As a good number of the country people in the neighbourhood followed in the train of the invaders, the whole party of the impostors were thrown into consternation at the exposure; and, fearing that the tale being circulated through the country, their abuse of the sacred profession would be turned into ridicule, and they themselves not only rendered despicable in the eyes of the multitude, but deprived of farther sources of emolument, they packed up all their baggage so soon as the alarm was over, and stealthily left the castle about the hour of midnight.

Having departed so early we had performed a good part of our journey before sunrise, when, leaving the road so soon as it became light, they proceeded for some distance along an unfrequented track, and then halted. Here, after holding a consultation among themselves on the misfortune that had happened to them, they condemned me to a severe punishment for having betrayed them: and tucking up their robes forthwith, they took the image of the goddess off my back, laid it on the ground, and, without more ado, removed my pack-saddle and all my trappings also. Then tying me to an oak tree, they scourged me with their knuckle-bone whips till I thought they would have killed me; and one, especially, even after all the others had satisfied their barbarity, brandished his

sharp axe over his head, and threatened to hamstring me, because, forsooth, I had deprived him, as he said, of his spotless reputation. He would actually have carried into effect his object, but for his comrades, who, not from compassion towards myself, but for the sake of the image of the goddess that lay on the ground, preferred to save my life. Accordingly, the goddess was once more placed on my back, together with other packages; and then having been driven back into the road, we proceeded on our way till we came to a very fine and noble city. Here we no sooner arrived, than one of the principal inhabitants, an extremely religious person, hearing the beating of drums, the sound of cymbals, and the soft music of our Phrygian melodies, came forth to meet us, and, owing to his high veneration for the gods, invited the priests to come to his house with the goddess. We remained here accordingly, within the range of his premises, and the house being a very large one, provided us with ample accommodation. Meanwhile our host sacrificed the fattest victims for the goddess, and treated her divinity with the most profound veneration.

During our sojourn within the walls of this dwelling, I found good reason to bear it in remembrance, owing to a narrow escape of my life I experienced there. An inhabitant of the country in the neighbourhood having sent to the master of the house, his landlord, the very

fat haunch of an exceeding large stag* which he had hunted and killed, the domestics who had the care of it incautiously hung it up behind the kitchen-door, so near the ground that a dog, being not only a hound by profession, but a thief also, speedily deceived the watchful eyes of the guardian, and joyfully escaped with the prize. So soon as the loss was discovered by the cook, the accident, which he attributed to his own negligence, grieved him beyond measure, and the idea of his master's anger at being disappointed of his supper so frightened him, that, after lamenting his misfortune for a long time and shedding many vain tears, he took a rope, and, after tenderly embracing a little boy, his son, was going to hang himself. At this moment his faithful wife, apprized to the full extent of her husband's calamity, seized him with both her hands, and violently snatching from him the deadly noose, "What," said she, "art thou out of thy senses? Canst thou not see that the gods have provided a remedy for thy loss? Bestir thyself, forsooth! And if this terrible whirlwind of fortune hath not blown away thy wits, listen to the advice I give thee. Lay hold of the strange ass yonder, take him to a solitary spot, stick thy knife in his throat, and cut off one of his haunches in the form of the one thou hast lost; then season it with thy savoury sauces, and serve

* Immanis cervi pinguissimum femur. The same story is related by Lucian of the haunch of a wild ass, *ονου αγριου μηρον*.

it up for supper to our lord, instead of the haunch of venison."

The reprobate cook, happy at the thought of saving his own life at the expense of mine, was much pleased at the sagacity of his wife and fellow-servant, and immediately began to whet his knife on purpose to slaughter me.

BOOK IX.

Lucius flies for refuge to the Supper-room — Supposed to be afflicted with Hydrophobia — The test of Water — Ambiguous Oracle of Priests of the Syrian Goddess — The Impostors arrested for Theft and Sacrilege — Lucius sold to a Baker — Lucius cruelly worked in a Mill — The Baker's wicked Wife — Her traffic with Witches — Supernatural death of the Baker — Lucius sold to a poor Gardener — Visit of the Gardener to a Rich Neighbour — Supernatural Omens — Tragical occurrence.

Eighth Episode.—*The Rural Tyrant.*

Adventure of the Gardener with a Soldier — Gardener and Lucius take refuge in a house in the City — Lucius and the Gardener discovered and captured.

While the impious hands of the butcher were thus preparing the implements to put me to death, I was considering how to save my life and escape from the hands of my executioner. Stimulated accordingly by the imminence of the danger, and having no time for reflection, I broke the halter with which I was tied, by a sudden jerk, and galloped away as fast as my legs would carry me, flinging out my heels behind me all the way I went, the better to defend myself. Rapidly dashing across the first portico I came to, I at once bolted into the chamber, where the master of the house together with the priests were eating their sacrificial

supper, overturning the plates, the dishes, all the apparatus of the supper, and the tables also. At the noise of the crash, the master of the house was much astonished, and having had me delivered over to the servants to take care of, he gave them a particular charge to confine "that troublesome frisky jackass," as he called me, and not allow me any more to interrupt the sober proceedings of their festival. For my own part, by the trick I had performed, having successfully escaped from the butcher's hands, I very joyfully made up my mind to the thought of my imprisonment.

But, alas! the fatal disposition of Divine Providence is neither to be prevented nor modified by the most prudent counsels, or the most sagacious remedies; nor can mortal man against the will of fortune arrive at prosperity. It happened accordingly in the present instance, that at the very moment I was thus endeavouring to procure my deliverance, a most dangerous tempest, that eventually had nearly overwhelmed me, was then brewing. While they were removing me from the sacrificial supper chamber, in order to lock me up in another part of the building, one of the servant boys burst into the apartment with terror in his countenance, and in a state of dreadful agitation, —as I heard the servants telling one another in a whisper—announced to his master, that some of the baggage animals, which a little while before had been bitten by a mad dog, were just gone mad. It appeared

that on the occasion referred to, the dog came running along out of the next street at a furious rate, entered by the back gate of the premises, and first attacked and bit several of the hounds, after which rushing to the nearest of the stables he bit the horses, as well as several of the attendants and servants who endeavoured to drive him away. The men who had been bitten were—Myrtilus the muleteer, Hephæstion the cook, Hypatius the chamberlain, Apollonius the doctor, and several others. The whole family being thrown into violent consternation at the intelligence, every body concluded by my recent behaviour that I too was certainly afflicted with the rabid distemper; so being fearfully anxious for their own preservation, they unanimously encouraged one another to seize hold of every offensive weapon within their reach in order to put an end to me, notwithstanding that they themselves were at the moment much madder than I was. And now as they got easily and speedily all manner of implements to suit their purpose, such as hunting spears, javelins, aye and axes also; my limbs would certainly then have been severed from my body, had I not yielded at once to the sudden blast of the whirlwind, and rushed without more ado into the bedchamber of the priests my masters.

Hither I was promptly followed by a host of my enemies, who, having closed and fastened the door upon me, and placed a guard outside before the entrance, were contented to allow me to perish of my own accord,

of the pestilent incurable disease, which they took for granted would speedily consume and destroy me.

Meanwhile, finding myself in partial possession of liberty, and at least in the enjoyment of one of fortune's favours, solitude, I threw myself down on a bed that was spread on the floor, and obtained, what I had not had a very long time before, the blessing of sound and, as it were, human repose. Indeed, I slept so long and was so exceedingly refreshed by the uncommon softness of the bed, that when I awoke it was already broad daylight. Springing on my feet, fresh and vigorous, I immediately began to listen to the conversation of the two men who, keeping guard upon me outside the door, were debating with one another as to what was to be done with me. And one said to the other, "What? this miserable ass mad still? I say 'tis impossible. No longer are there any signs of ferocity about him, so the virus must be extinct." With that the other expressed a contrary opinion, and a difference arising between them, they both together peeped through a crack in the door, in order to take a look at me; when seeing that I was quietly standing at my ease as well as ever, they opened the door cautiously and entered the apartment. Then, while they were debating with one another as to what experiments with regard to me it were necessary to make, one of them, who certainly was sent for my deliverance express from heaven, after several of the people of the household had come in and joined the consultation, proposed to all the persons assembled a

mode of testing my sanity. "Offer him," said he, "a full pail of water, and if he swallow it intrepidly in his usual manner, he is surely free of the distemper; but if, on the contrary, he flinches when he sees the liquid, and shrinks from coming in contact with it, you may be sure that the baneful madness has yet an obstinate hold on him. For this fact is contained in the books of our ancient writers, and we know it by experience."

All the spectators immediately agreed to the man's proposal, and accordingly sending an enormous vessel to the neighbouring fountain, it was filled with transparent water, and placed before me. Although they offered it with doubt and hesitation, I delayed not a moment to advance, and meet the bearer, and stretching forward my nose, for I was exceedingly thirsty, I plunged my head up to my very eyes in the water, and gulped down a copious and under present circumstances a truly salutiferous draught. The moment I had been seen to drink, they all approached me with confidence, and made trial of my gentleness in different ways; while I, as one patted me with his hand, another stroked my ears, and a third pulled me by the halter, bore every thing they did with such excessive patience, that my docility met with universal approbation, and they were all thoroughly convinced of their mistake in thinking me mad.

Having, in the manner above related, escaped from a twofold danger, the priests, on the day after the last-mentioned occurrence, departed from their present

quarters, and I was once more led out into the road laden with divine pillage. Pursuing our mendicant pilgrimage through the country to the music of cymbals and castanets, we at last, after visiting sundry castles and small houses, arrived at a certain town which, as the inhabitants informed us, was built over the half-perished walls of a once opulent city. Here the most pious priests, my masters, finding themselves pampered with food at the public expense, remained for several days, while they derived extraordinary recompence by practising a new species of deception on the public by means of an oracle they pretended to proclaim. This oracle, which suited all the various cases of the many different people who consulted them, ran as follows :—

> "Lo, where yon yoke of oxen cleave the soil,
> The joyful earth shall soon repay the toil."*

Thus their reply to everybody being always in the same terms, if a person proposed a question relating to matrimony, aye or nay; the interrogator interpreted the answer to the effect that he ought to marry immediately and be blessed by a family of children. Again, if one, doubtful whether or not to purchase a lot of land, consulted the oracle, he derived from the same reply an answer in the affirmative, from the reference to a yoke of oxen and an abundant harvest. The traveller also, about to set forward on a journey, and

* Ideo conjuncti terram proscindunt boves
Ut in futurum læta germinent sata.

anxious to depart under divine auspices, anticipated a profitable, dangerless expedition by the allusion to the prolific earth and to oxen, the most docile of quadrupeds. Nay, even the soldier desirous of knowing his fate before going into battle, or in pursuit of a band of robbers, flattered himself with the idea of making a copious harvest of plunder, and of bending the necks of his enemies to the yoke.

Exercising after this fashion the capricious craft of divination, they continued for some time to scrape together a considerable sum of money, until at last overborne by the perpetual interrogatories put to them, and their unsound logic failing them more and more every day, they were obliged once more to shift their quarters for another temporary domicile. Departing accordingly from our present abode we travelled along a road even a great deal worse than the road we had come by the day we arrived. In some places the entire country before us exhibited a uniform fluid surface like a stagnant lake; in others, when passing over dry land comparatively, the water rushed in whirlpools through the land-drains we had to cross, and the ground under our feet was muddy, slippery clay. At last, frequently beating my legs against obstacles of various sorts, I became so exceedingly fatigued, that I was hardly able to keep in the proper path, and fell down repeatedly.

And now behold while we were thus painfully pursuing our toilsome journey, a band of armed cavalry

falling upon us from behind with such impetuosity that they could scarcely hold in their horses forthwith took prisoners my master, our leader, and all the rest of his companions. Calling them by the most opprobrious names, seizing them by the throat, and every now and then beating them with their fists, they authoritatively bade them deliver up the gold cup they had stolen from the town whence we last departed. Meanwhile, as the soldiers were putting handcuffs on the men, and diligently making search for the object required, one soldier, less scrupulous than the rest, having had the audacity to search the image of the Goddess on my back, he drew forth from her bosom the cup in question, which they, having entered the sanctuary of Cybele under pretence of performing their secret mysteries, had clandestinely purloined. For which reason, after committing the heinous crime, they had departed stealthily, and passed the Pomœrium before it was quite daylight, in order to escape punishment. These hardened offenders, however, were by no means confounded or abashed at the discovery of their guilt, but, on the contrary, pretended to make light of their nefarious wickedness, and treat the matter as a jest, exclaiming with mendacious effrontery to the soldiers, laughing all the time, "Why, what a disturbance are you making here about nothing at all! Truly thus it is continually with honest men, and we, a parcel of innocent priests, are falling into trouble, and put in danger of capital punishment for the sake of one single

cup,—a cup that the Goddess Cybele made a present of to her sister, the Syrian divinity, as a pledge of hospitality." The above frivolous excuse and many others similar were all to no purpose, for the soldiers delivered over the plunderers to the peasants of the country, who recklessly binding with ropes their limbs, cast them into a subterraneous prison, dark as the Tullian dungeon in Rome.

The gang of religious impostors being thus disposed of, the image I had carried on my back, together with the stolen cup now recovered, were consecrated as votive offerings, and suspended in the proper place for gifts of a like description in the temple of Cybele. As regarded myself, I was once more brought out for sale in the public market. There having been duly delivered over to the crier, I was sold to a baker belonging to a neighbouring village, who gave seven pieces of money more than the priests, my late masters, had paid for me. So soon as I had become the property of my new owner, he, having just purchased a quantity of wheat, immediately put a heavy load of it on my back, and drove me to the place of his abode. The road we went was exceedingly rough and gravelly, grievously impeded moreover by the stumps of trees of all sizes and shapes. So soon as we arrived, I was led to the bakehouse where he exercised his profession, in which large apartment I saw several flour-mills turned by animals, moving round in a circle. Though the work was carried on here not only the

whole of the day, but in the evening by lamp-light, my new master, perhaps fearing that the view of the first rudiments of the service might have somewhat alarmed me, treated me the first day of our arrival as the Romans behave to an honoured foreigner; and with an abundant supply of food in my manger, I had a perfect holiday.

With the end of the first day, however, the blessings of a full belly and of the rest I had enjoyed came to a termination; for not only was I set to work very early the next morning, but I was put in a mill that, as it seemed to me, was the largest of all in the apartment. My eyes being blinded, and my head confined in such a manner that I was continually kept at an equal distance from the centre of the circle, I was driven along a hollow path or channel, preserving always the same orbit, and obliged to follow the same footsteps over and over again. I was not forgetful, however, under my present misfortune, of the prudence and sagacity that belonged to me, nor did I render myself an easy victim to my apprenticeship. But though I had frequently seen, while I was a man, machines made to revolve in a like manner with those at present, yet thinking I might get myself employed in some lighter description of labour, or at all events be taken out of harness to be fed and rest awhile, I pretended to be a novice, and not know how to proceed; and making believe to be seized with a fit of stupefaction, I stopped all of a sudden and stood stock still. But

alas! instead of being considered altogether unfit for my work and useless for such sort of service, as I had imagined, on the contrary my cleverness only brought me into still further trouble; for the instant I halted, the men in the bakehouse set up a shout simultaneously, and, as if upon a given signal, all their sticks at once fell upon me in a shower. The noise of the voices, in addition to the pain of the blows, which being blinded I was unprepared for, so terrified me, that from that instant I abandoned all cunning tricks, and straining with my whole weight upon the rush rope-traces, walked steadily round in my ring like a practised draught-horse. By which sudden change of sect as it were in asinine philosophy, I excited a general burst of laughter.

The greatest portion of the day had already passed when my traces were unhooked, and being taken away from the machine I was led to a manger plentifully supplied with food. Nevertheless, although I was ready to die with hunger, and withal was dreadfully fatigued and had the utmost need of having my strength restored, the curiosity of my nature overpowered every other sensation, and I actually refrained from eating in order to look around me. I viewed with a degree of eagerness amounting to painful delight the discipline of our abominable workshop. What a miserable stunted set of human beings did I see before me! Creatures, ye gracious gods, whose lacerated backs and shoulders, shaded rather than covered with

ragged cloaks, were marked with black and blue wheals; their heads half-shaved; their foreheads branded with letters; their faces of ghastly paleness, their eyes, from the vaporous heat of dark smoky chambers, sore and rheumy, their eyelids glued together, and their ankles encompassed by heavy iron rings. The flesh of the greater portion was visible through the rents and fissures of their tattered garments, while the entire bodies of the remainder, naked with the exception of a slender covering about the waist, were sprinkled over with a dirty mixture of flour and ashes like the dust of an amphitheatre.

But when I attempt to describe my fellow labourers, the beasts of draught, where shall I find words to use, or how shall I begin? A miserable assemblage of weak, worn-out mules and geldings, the ulcerated wounds on their necks in a state of putrefaction; their chests from the friction of the rush breast-rope galled and raw; their sides laid bare to the bone from incessant stripes; their hoofs elongated to an extraordinary degree from excessive work, and their entire skin exasperated by inveterate mange,—all standing at the manger, some gasping under the incessant impulse of a languid cough, and panting at their nostrils like a pair of bellows; and others with their heads deeply buried in the heaps of chaff they were devouring.

At the sight of the sad spectacle I could not refrain from calling to mind the condition and fortunes of the once happy Lucius; and lamenting miseries which,

having become a member of the family I was now doomed to participate, I felt myself at that moment reduced to the very lowest pitch of calamity. In silence and in sorrow I held down my drooping head. One sole circumstance, however, in the miserable life of torment I was leading afforded me comfort; namely, the very ample gratification of my excessive natural curiosity that I experienced in consequence of people paying no manner of attention to me, and freely saying and doing without restraint whatever they were inclined to in my presence. Even now I hold the days when I was an ass in grateful remembrance; for as the divine author of Greek poetry, when desirous of exhibiting the character of a man of consummate prudence, justly chose for an example one who, travelling through many cities and becoming acquainted with people of various nations, ultimately attained to virtues of the highest order: so I, though indeed my metamorphose may not have made me quite so wise as Ulysses, have, through the manifold vicissitudes of fortune that I was compelled to endure, wonderfully increased my knowledge. Many forsooth are the tales which, were I not averse to infringing the bounds of discretion, I could relate for the edification of my reader.

My master, the baker, was a well behaved, tolerably good man, but his wife, of all the women in the world, was the most wicked creature in existence, and continually rendered his home such a painful scene of tribulation to him, that, by Hercules! many is the

time and oft that I have silently deplored his fate. The heart of that most detestable woman was like a common cess-pool, where all the evil dispositions of our nature were collected together. There was actually no description of wickedness she was not subject to. She was cruel, treacherous, malevolent, obstinate, penurious; yet profuse in expenses of dissipation, faithless to her husband, a cheat and a drunkard. She was, moreover, totally without regard for the divinities, and treated their ceremonies with contempt; nay, substituted instead, a certain other religion* and another God, whom mendaciously and sacrilegiously she called the only God. Thus, under the pretence of vain, empty observances, deceiving all her neighbours, and betraying her miserable husband, she passed her time, beginning every day with morning draughts of wine, in excessive debauchery.

Such was the persecutor that it fell to my unfortunate lot to have in this woman, for she took an extraordinary dislike to me. Even while she was still in bed, and before daybreak, she used to call out, and bid the people put the new ass in the mill; and when she was up and out of her chamber, she would come and stand over me, and make them inflict upon me repeated stripes in her presence while I was at work. Neither

* In the character of this woman drawn by Apuleius is to be remarked a striking exemplification of the feeling entertained towards the Christians and their religious ceremonies by the literary men of the age at the time he wrote.

would she allow me to be taken out of harness at the usual period at dinner time, when all the other animals were fed, but kept me standing a long time before she would allow me to be led to the manger.

The barbarity of this woman very much stimulated my natural disposition to inquisitiveness, and led me to observe her goings on the more narrowly. Indeed, I kept an accurate account of all her visitors; and notwithstanding that for the most part of the time my eyes were blinded, my sagacity, in spite of the deformity of my figure, through the mistake of Fotis in changing me into an ass instead of a bird, enabled me to form tolerably certain conclusions concerning them by other means. I had the consolation of possessing an uncommonly fine pair of long ears, with which I could hear every word that was uttered around me within a considerable distance. For example, one old woman, her inseparable companion, who breakfasted with her every day, used to go to and fro with all her notes and messages; and these two women would spend the whole of their time swallowing repeated draughts of wine, strong and undiluted, while they laid their wits together, and contrived the most artful schemes to deceive my unfortunate master.

At last one day, while, at the usual hour, myself and all the other animals were taken to drink at a neighbouring lake, by an old, lame man, our driver, I heard it said on the way, that the baker had procured a bill of divorce against his execrable helpmate, and

that intelligence turned out in due time to be true. Accordingly, such being the proceedings instituted against her, and the genuine atrocity of her disposition being exasperated by the affront so justly inflicted, she resorted at once to the malicious resources that an enraged, revengeful woman usually has recourse to. Among other arts and contrivances to gratify her vengeance, she took the utmost pains to find out and communicate with a certain woman who had the reputation of being a witch, whose spells and incantations were of power unlimited. Having conciliated this woman by frequent supplications and making her various presents, she besought of her one of two things —either to soften the heart of her husband, so that he might be reconciled to her; or, if unable to do that, to send a ghost or some evil spirit to put him to a violent death. With that, the sorceress, invoking the divine powers at her command, first exercised the primary weapons of her wicked art in trying to inspire the heart of the grievously offended baker with conjugal love; but entirely failing in the endeavour, and becoming irritated against the divinities, indignant at their contemptuous neglect of her invocations, and anxious not to lose the stipulated reward of her services, she determined to contrive the death of my unfortunate master. Therefore she raised from the grave, to effect her purpose, the shade of a woman who had been murdered. But, reader, peradventure, if thou art a scrupulous person, thou wilt here carp at

my narrative, and, doubting my veracity, exclaim, "Why, thou silly jackass, thou that wert confined continually within the walls of a bake-house, how couldst thou possibly know what those women were doing while out of thy sight and hearing?" Yet, I pray thee, be patient for a little while, and listen with attention; then thou wilt know how an inquisitive human being, wearing an ass's form, obtained the knowledge of all proceedings relating to the destruction of the baker.

One day, about noon, there entered the bakehouse a bare-footed woman half clad, wearing a mourning mantle thrown across her shoulders, her pale sallow features marked by a lowering expression of guilt, her grisly dishevelled hair sprinkled with ashes, and her front locks streaming over her face. Such was the extraordinary appearance of the stranger. Unexpectedly approaching the baker, and taking him gently by the hand, she drew him aside, and led him into an adjoining chamber, as if she had private intelligence to communicate. After the baker had departed, and a considerable period had elapsed without his returning, at last all the wheat that had been delivered to the workmen to grind was converted into flour; and as it was necessary to apply to the baker for more, the servants went to the door of the chamber whither he had retired, and called to him for a fresh supply of wheat to go on with their labour. Receiving no answer, they knocked very loud at the door, and after continued silence

called again several times, and thumped still harder than before. They then perceived that the door was carefully locked and bolted; upon which, at once concluding that some serious catastrophe had happened, they pushed against it with their utmost strength, and by a violent effort, either breaking the hinge or driving it out of its socket, they effected an entrance by force. The moment they were within the chamber, they saw the baker hanging quite dead from one of the beams of the ceiling, but the woman who had accompanied him had disappeared and was nowhere to be seen.

So soon as the neck was freed from the noose and the body taken down, preparations for the funeral were immediately commenced, and the corpse, having been cleansed by its last ablution, and the customary offices for the dead having been performed, was carried to the sepulchre, accompanied by a great concourse of people uttering bitter lamentations. The next day the baker's daughter, by a former wife, who had been married a little time before, and lived in a neighbouring village, came running from her home to the bakehouse, shaking her dishevelled hair, and beating her bosom with her fists in sorrow at the death of her father; of which event, though she had not received information from any living being, she was nevertheless perfectly cognizant. For in the dead of the previous night the figure of her father, with the fatal rope about his neck, had appeared, and disclosed to her her stepmother's wicked

infidelity, and all the circumstances how the ghost raised by a witch at her request had murdered him.

The baker's daughter bewailed the fate of her father for several days in succession, until she was prevailed upon by the friends of the family not to continue her dismal lamentations any longer. And on the ninth day after the funeral, when the last solemnities of the tomb had been fully completed, the whole of the property and household furniture, including slaves and beasts of burden, were brought out to be sold by auction for the benefit of the heiress. Thus did capricious fortune separate from one another, and disperse in various directions, the members of one family.

For my part I was sold to a poor gardener, who paid for me fifty pieces of money, "A great price," he said, "though," he added, "such a creature as myself was indispensable to help him to gain a livelihood." Now here, before going any farther, it were methinks advisable to acquaint thee, reader, with the nature of the service I had to perform while I remained in this gardener's possession. Every morning my new master used to lead me, with a heavy load of vegetables on my back, to a neighbouring city, and when he had sold all his greens, he would then mount upon me, and ride me back all the way to his garden. There, while he was digging, irrigating the ground, and performing various other sorts of labour in a stooping position, I was certainly at my ease, and refreshed by silence and rest. But when, owing to the mutations of the hea-

venly bodies and the lapse of days and months of the revolving year, the delightful fragrance of autumn had evaporated, and was succeeded by the frosts of Capricorn, lo and behold, I, being kept in the open air, was almost perished to death with cold. Confined in a stable or shed without a roof, I was continually exposed to the dews at night, and not unfrequently to heavy rain. Neither had I any litter to lie upon, nor could my master, owing to his extreme poverty, allow me a covering for my body, were it never so slender; nay, he had nothing of the sort even for himself, but was satisfied with the shelter and warmth of his little cottage thatched with boughs and leaves. Notwithstanding, the mud was frequently frozen so hard in the morning that I was put to severe pain by striking my unshod feet against the cold hardened clods. Moreover, in addition to these grievances, though my master and myself fared alike, the food I got was neither of the sort I was used to, nor in quantity enough to fill my belly. We partook of the same miserable supper of old lettuces that had run to seed, were grown to such an enormous size that they resembled brooms, and their juice was muddy and bitter from decay.

Such was the manner of my life, and such my food day after day and night after night in succession for a considerable period; during which there happened no remarkable incident worth relating. At last, one very rainy moonless night, a traveller came to my master's

little cottage, and begged admittance. He was a householder of a neighbouring village, who, having got out of his road in the dark and completely lost his way, had wandered to our garden. As his horse was dead tired, and himself wet to the skin, the gardener gave him, if not a hospitable, at least a kind, reception and shelter. In the morning, when he departed, notwithstanding his limbs had not received in the night the comfort of a delicate bed, he promised my master to send him from his farm, in gratitude for his lodging, some wheat and olives, and a couple of casks of wine, to fetch which articles, so soon as the other had gone away, the gardener forthwith mounted on my back. Sitting on my bare spine, and carrying with him some empty wine-skins and a sack, he rode me the distance of sixty stadia* to the farm in question, where, at the moment we arrived, the family were then just about to sit down to a sumptuous dinner.

And now I have a wonderful occurrence to relate. My master having been invited to partake of the entertainment, having taken his place at the table accordingly, and several cups of wine having been expended in drinking healths among the company, there came suddenly running into the apartment one of the hens from the poultry yard, cackling as if she wanted to lay an egg. Upon which said the master of the house, looking at the hen, and observing her beha-

* Seven miles and a half.

viour, "Well done, my maiden! Verily thou art a good prolific servant, for thou hast feasted us for many a day with thy offspring, and now, methinks, art in the mind to present us with another dainty morsel. Ho! boy," continued he, addressing himself to the male servant, "bestir thyself. Go, as thou art wont to do, and place a basket for the hen in yon corner." At these words of the master, the boy did as he was desired, and immediately brought in the basket; but, on the contrary, the hen, refusing to go near her usual bed, immediately squatted herself at her master's feet, and there produced—not such an egg as we know hens lay every day, but a premature live chicken.

No sooner had the precocious prodigy begun to run chirruping about the room after its mother, perfect in all its parts, in its eyesight, feathers, claws, &c., than the hearts of all spectators were struck with terror at the appearance of another miracle of more dire portentous character. The earth underneath the dinner-table burst open in a yawning chasm, whence gushed forth a copious fountain of blood, that sprinkled the table with large heavy drops. And at the same moment, while every one was looking at these divine presages with tremulous dismay and wonderment, one of the servants rushed into the room from the wine-cellar, announcing that the wine in all the casks—wine that had been stored a long while ago—was boiling hot, and bubbling like water in a cauldron. Finally, simultaneous with the above ominous appearances,

several weasels, having fast hold with their teeth of a dead serpent, dragged it into the house; the sheep-dog opened his mouth, and out jumped a little green frog; and a ram, that stood close to the sheep-dog, seizing him immediately by the throat with his teeth, strangled him at a single bite.

These miraculous, terrible phenomena threw the master of the house and all his family into grievous consternation. Their minds were paralysed. What they were about, what they ought to do, how or where to begin, what to leave to be done last, how many or what sort of victims to procure for sacrifice, or how otherwise best to appease the anger of the celestial deities, nobody knew. And thus, entirely overwhelmed with intense fear, they were in torpid suspense, when all of a sudden a servant arrived in haste from one of the neighbouring farms, bringing sad intelligence. A fearful catastrophe had visited the family of the master of the house with awful destruction. His three sons, sons of their highly respected father, all grown-up young men, well educated, and of modest disposition, were now no more. The circumstances of their melancholy death, as related by the messenger, were as follows.

EIGHTH EPISODE.

THE RURAL TYRANT.

Close to the farm where the young men inhabited, dwelt an humble cottager, with whose son from their early youth they had lived on terms of familiarity. Not far from their abode was the domicile of a neighbour, young, rich, and the proprietor of a vast expanse of fertile fields. He was also of a noble family; but became a leader of factions, insolently lorded it as he pleased over the people in the city, and converted the glory derived from his ancestors to evil purpose. Not even in the neighbourhood of his own domain was he less tyrannical, but, holding in no respect the poverty of the poor cottager, he drove away his oxen, killed his sheep, trampled down his unripe corn, so that he utterly destroyed all hope of the coming harvest, and, in short, invaded the limited circle of his humble neighbour as if he were making inroads in the country of an enemy. Finally, he raised a frivolous question about proprietorship, and claimed all the land.

Now the husbandman, though otherwise of a mild, unassuming disposition, finding himself, through the avarice of the rich man, likely to be deprived of all he had, and determining, at all events, to keep land enough to dig himself a grave, became violently agi-

tated, and forthwith called together a large assemblage of his friends, in order to consult them relative to the limits of his boundary. Among those who willingly attended the summons, ready to assist in his difficulty and defend his rights to the utmost of their power, were the sons of our host, the three brothers above mentioned.

When the cottager appeared in his rich neighbour's presence, with all his auxiliaries, the cruel man was by no means daunted nor confused at the sight of so many people; and when the cottager began mildly to expostulate, and do all he could to pacify his boisterous disposition, so far from promising to abstain in future from acts of rapine, he was even unable to confine his tongue to civil language. He swore by the life of his most dear relatives, and by his own life, that nought he cared for the mediators, and would make his servants drag the cottager by the ears from his house, and thrust him out of the country. At the above threat, the minds of all the hearers were filled with indignation, and, without a moment's hesitation, one of our host's three sons told him plainly, that the liberal power of the law was strong, and would protect the poor from the insolence of a wealthy tyrant like him. No sooner had the youth pronounced the latter words, than the truculent spirit of the other became roused to a pitch of insanity; and as if struck by the whip of the Furies, or like fire infuriated by oil or sulphur, he shouted to his people in a frantic

rage, and bade them lay on the dogs. Sheep dogs and house dogs, great rough, fierce animals, with large, heavy collars* about their necks, creatures accustomed to feed upon dead carcases in the fields, and worry travellers in the open thoroughfares, were accordingly let loose; and, encouraged to the attack by the whooping and holloing of their masters, rushed furiously on the people. Seizing and mercilessly tearing their victims, growling and barking discordantly, and pursuing the terrified remainder, the youngest of the brothers fled from the massacre among a dense mass of fugitives, but severely bruising his toes against a stone as he ran, he lucklessly fell to the ground, and was instantly torn in pieces. No sooner was he prostrate than the savage animals made him their prey, before his brothers, notwithstanding their efforts were accelerated by grief at the sound of his last agonizing cries, could render him assistance. Hurling large stones at the dogs, and with their cloaks wrapped round their left arms for defence, doing all that lay in their power to defend the unfortunate youth, still were they utterly unable to drive away his assailants.

Thus compelled to leave the lacerated body of their youngest brother, whose last words implored them to avenge his death on the murderer, with ardent courage, that overcame the feeling of despair, and with heroic

* "Annulatos." This word appears in the Francfort edition, 1621. The Paris Delphin edition, 1648, substitutes "alumnatos," which quite alters the sense.

disregard of their own lives and safety, they rushed upon and assaulted the rich man with stones, with the impetuosity, by Hercules, of madmen. But that bloodthirsty homicide, trained by practice to similar deeds of outrage, launched a spear at one of the two survivors, that passed through and through his body, inflicting a mortal wound. Neither was he, though dead in an instant, doomed to fall; but he remained suspended—propped lifeless on the long strong handle of the weapon, whose point stuck in the ground. With that, a tall powerful servant of the assassin, hastening to the spot where his master stood, violently hurled a stone at the last surviving brother, that slightly grazed his fingers without inflicting injury; though his antagonist, and all who beheld the blow, imagined it had struck his arm. Whereupon the youth's presence of mind suggesting the prospect of revenge, he exclaimed to his savage oppressor, feigning as if he had received a grievous hurt, and the arm were disabled: "Well hast thou now, exulting in the extinction of an entire family, completed thy glorious triumph, and achieved a victory over thy prostrate fellow citizens. But though the blood of three brothers regale thy insatiable cruelty, yet, extend as thou wilt the limits of thy lands, ever shalt thou find thyself circumscribed by a boundary, ever shall there be some one or other neighbour to trench upon thee. The arm, alas! that would have smote off thy head, by the iniquitous decree of fate hangs powerless at my side." So soon

as the young man had uttered these words the furious robber grasped his sword in a fit of exasperation, and rushed forwards to kill him outright. But he had provoked an enemy with strength equal to his own, and whose resistance was quick, sudden, and unexpected. The youth, seizing his antagonist by the right arm unawares with his left, and brandishing his sword in his right hand, let fall on him one tremendous blow, and repeated it again and again, till his soul parted from his body. Then while the attendants, eager to revenge the death of their master, were running to seize him, with the blade still reeking with the blood of his enemy, he nearly severed his own head from his body.

END OF EIGHTH EPISODE.

Such were the sanguinary events which, relating to the unfortunate family of the master of the house, were not only announced by the messenger, but by the portentous phenomena above related. So soon as the fatal intelligence was communicated to the unfortunate old man, he neither uttered a single word nor shed a tear, but, overwhelmed by the concurrence of so great misfortunes all together, he silently took the knife he

had just used to carve the viands and cut cheese for his guests, and following the example of his miserable son, drew it across his throat repeatedly, till his face fell forwards on the table, and a river of warm blood obliterated the gory portentous drops that had previously fallen upon it. Such is the melancholy history of the events of fortune, that in a sadly short period annihilated a whole family. At the same time the gardener, not without misfortunes of his own, having had nothing but tears to dine upon, silently and sorrowfully clasped together his empty hands, and lamenting the fate of his host and family, mounted once more upon my back, and we returned home the way we came.

Notwithstanding the way was the same as before, our journey was marked by variety, and an accident befel my master. For a certain tall fellow, as it would appear by his dress, a soldier belonging to one of the legions, met us full butt as we were going along, and in a haughty, arrogant tone, said he to the gardener, "Whither art thou going with that unladen ass?" My master not having yet recovered the effect of the appalling scene he had witnessed, and being ignorant of the language of the soldier, who spoke in Latin, passed on without making any reply to the interrogation. Upon which the soldier, taking the silence of the other as an affront, became highly indignant, and unable to control the insolence that naturally belonged to him, struck my master with a

vine stick he held in his hand, and pushed him off my back. The gardener, notwithstanding the ill usage, very humbly replied, that he did not understand the other's language, or know what he said. With that the soldier spoke in Greek, and said he, "Whither art thou taking that ass?" "To the next city," replied the gardener. "But I want him," said the soldier, "and must needs take him along with our other animals, to fetch the baggage of the commanding officer from the neighbouring village." So saying he seized hold of the halter and began to haul me along. Upon this the gardener wiping away the blood that was trickling from the wound made in his head by the vine stick, still preserving a civil quiet demeanour towards the soldier, calling him his comrade, and speaking even more submissively than before, besought him in the name of good fortune to let me go. For, said he, "The jackass is not only sluggish, but given to the grievous complaint of tumbling down. Neither is he strong enough to carry heavy burdens. Nay, even with a light load of vegetables from my garden on his back, sadly doth he puff and blow." But the soldier was not satisfied with the excuses of the gardener, neither would he be prevailed upon by the most earnest entreaties. On the contrary, leaping on my back, the more earnestly the other appealed to him the savager he grew. Bent apparently on doing my master a serious injury, he had shifted his hold on the vine stick in order to cleave his skull with a large knob at the upper

end, when the gardener perceiving the manœuvre, and being driven to his last resource, stooped down, as if to excite the soldier's compassion by embracing his knees. But no sooner was he thus bent to the ground almost double, than suddenly he laid hold of both his feet, tossed them at once upwards into the air, and gave him a heavy fall on the ground.

When he was down he immediately began to beat him with his fists, punch him with his elbows, and lastly, snatching up a stone from the road, knocked him about the face, the hands, and sides with it. Meanwhile, the soldier lying on his back, and so overpowered from the beginning that he could neither make resistance nor in the least defend himself, declared, nevertheless, over and over again, that he would cut the gardener in pieces with his sword the moment he got upon his legs again. By which information the gardener profiting, wrested the sword from his hand ere long, and threw it away a long distance. Then he hit him again, and fell to pummelling him even harder than before, till the soldier, adopting the only possible means to save his life, feigned himself dead. Upon which the gardener picked up his sword from the ground, mounted on my back and rode me away, urging me all the while to my utmost speed. Not caring, however, under present circumstances, after the manner he had served the soldier, to return to his own garden, he directed my course straight to the city, where, calling at the dwelling house of an acquaintance, he related our peri-

lous adventure, and threw himself on his friend's protection, earnestly entreating permission to conceal himself and his ass in the house for two, three, or more days, so that he might escape the penalty of the capital offence he had incurred. The inhabitant readily received him; and not forgetful of his former terms of friendship with an old comrade, conducted him below to a warehouse, thrust him into a capacious chest, and covered him by the lid. For my part, they dragged me up several steps till my legs were almost bent double in the effort of mounting, and confined me in an upper chamber.

The soldier meanwhile, as I learnt afterwards, after lying a considerable time on the ground where we left him, at last got up on his legs, tottering and staggering as if he had just emerged from a severe drinking bout; and grievously bruised and wounded, contrived with the utmost difficulty to creep to the city, supported on a stick. When arrived there, he for some time swallowed in silence the affront he had received; for, ashamed of his own clumsiness and want of ready vigour, he entirely forbore to relate to the inhabitants what had happened to him. Meeting, however, at last with some of his fellow soldiers, he acquainted them with the whole of the occurrence. His comrades accordingly, not only on account of the disgrace he had undergone, but because of the loss of his sword, which subjected him to the penalty attached to the breach of his military oath, agreed to hide him for some time in

their barracks; and carefully noting down the marks upon our persons, they made diligent inquiries to discover us. Vowing bitter vengeance against the assailant of their companion, they were not long in discovering a perfidious neighbour to betray to them the place of our concealment; upon which they forthwith betook themselves to the magistrates and laid a false accusation against my master. A valuable silver cup belonging to their commanding officer, lost, they said, on the road, had been found by a certain gardener, who had concealed himself in the house of one of his acquaintance, in order to avoid being compelled to restore the cup to its right owner.

So soon as the magistrates were informed of all the particulars, such as the name of the commanding officer, the house where we were, etc., they knocked at the door of our habitation, and having called in a loud voice, and announced themselves to the host, told him they had indisputable information that we were concealed on his premises, and that it were better for him to deliver us up at once; since by uselessly harbouring the delinquent, he would render himself, in his own person, amenable to capital punishment. Our host, notwithstanding, without showing any signs of trepidation, and anxious to save the life of a man whose dependence was in his friend's fidelity, undauntedly denied knowing anything at all about us, and maintained that for several preceding days he had never even set eyes on the gardener they were seeking. On the other hand the

soldiers swore by the head of the emperor, that the gardener actually was in the house, and in no place else. Meanwhile our host persisted in his denial so obstinately, that the magistrates determined to make strict search in order to discover the culprit. Accordingly they ordered the lictors and other public functionaries to enter within doors for the purpose. Which command having been supposed to be obeyed and every creek and corner of the dwelling diligently examined, word was brought to the magistrates that neither man nor jackass were to be found within the threshold. Upon which the soldiers outside, the instant they heard the latter assertion, grew exceedingly clamorous and maintained a noisy altercation with our host; violently calling on the name of Cæsar to witness that we were in the house to a certainty, and he asserting the direct contrary, and loudly beseeching the divinity of the gods to bear him testimony.

Such was the state of affairs in our domicile, when I hearing the disturbance below, and being a jackass of an unquiet, petulant, mighty inquisitive disposition, became irresistibly desirous of knowing the cause of all the tumult; and accordingly stretching my head and neck out of a little window in my apartment that looked upon the street, the eyes of one of the soldiers happened to fall in a line with the shadow of myself that fell upon the ground, and he immediately betrayed me to his companions. Upon which all the soldiers immediately uttered a loud unanimous shout of triumph,

and some of them instantly, without more ado, coming up the steps to the loft where I was, seized hold of me by the halter and led me down captive. They then began to search the house from top to bottom more narrowly than before, and accordingly discovering and opening the chest in which the gardener was concealed, they dragged the wretched man from his hiding-place, and took him before the magistrates, by whom he was sent to the public gaol in order to suffer the penalty of the law for the capital offence he had committed. For my part, the incident of my looking out of the window furnished a subject of laughter and conversation for a long time afterwards; and indeed gave rise to a happy conceit, to which the oft repeated proverb, "Detect a peeping ass by his shadow," is to be traced to its origin.

BOOK X.

Departure of Lucius with his new Master, the Soldier — Their arrival at the House of a Decurion.

Ninth Episode.—*The wicked Stepmother.*

Lucius sold to two brothers, Cook and Confectioner of a great Personage — Preference of Lucius to Human Food — His depredations discovered — Behaviour of Lucius at the Supper-table — The Company delighted at Lucius's Accomplishments and Sagacity — Preparations for a Gladiatorial Exhibition — The great Personage rides Lucius to Corinth — The great Personage proposes to make Lucius perform at the Amphitheatre.

Tenth Episode.—*A Woman condemned to be thrown to Wild Beasts.*

Dramatic representation at the Amphitheatre — Lucius makes his escape and gallops to Cenchreæ.

What afterwards became of my master, the gardener, I do not know; but the soldier who had been so beautifully beaten because he could not help it, came the next morning to the stable where I was, and untying me from the manger without any person saying a word to hinder him, led me away forthwith. Thence he brought me to his barracks, such at least I believed the place to be, where having loaded me with his own

baggage and accoutrements, and armed, and ornamented me in grand military style, he brought me forth into the road. In the first place I carried on my back a helmet which shone exceedingly bright; and a shield, whose polish was even more brilliant than that of the helmet; and lastly, a spear, remarkable for the length of its handle. With which latter,—more in fact for the sake of terrifying poor travellers on the road than in strict compliance with regulations, and to complete the style of marching order,—he took care conspicuously to crown the heap of the various other articles that composed my load. We travelled along a tolerably good road through the fields, till we arrived at a small city; where, instead of going to the inn, we put up in the house of a certain decurion, and I was delivered over in charge of one of the servant boys, during the absence of the soldier, who instantly departed in order to make the best of his way to his officer, the commander of a thousand men.

We remained in this city for several days, during which period a very dreadful crime was committed there, of which, reader, I feel inclined to include the relation in my narrative, in order that thou as well as myself may be made acquainted with it.

NINTH EPISODE.

THE WICKED STEP-MOTHER.

The master of the house to which my stable belonged had a son deeply versed in literature, a young man whose studious habits consequently rendered him also remarkable for piety and modest behaviour, a son in short such as, reader, you might wish to have of your own, or one like him. When he was very young his mother died, and his father contracted a second marriage, and by the last alliance had another son, a youth upwards of twelve years old at the time in question. Now the step-mother, whose beauty ever since the day of her marriage had reflected credit on the preference shown her by her husband, rather than her morals; whether in consequence of the insurmountable power of fate, or from natural want of principle, conceived a violent attachment for her son-in-law. Wherefore, gentle reader, thou art to know at the outset, that thou wilt have to lay aside the sock and, ascending to the buskin, peruse a tragical rather than a comic fable.

At all events, while the little Cupid was yet in his infancy, and unskilful in the elements of his art strove with feeble strength, the patient with comparative ease repressed her rising colour, and successfully re-

sisted his attacks; but becoming gradually more and more powerful, when at last—

> " Deep within her glowing soul—
> He ruled and reigned without control ;" *

then, totally succumbing to the raging sway of the divinity, and concealing the disease of the mind under pretence of bodily ailment, she suddenly feigned herself ill. Now, that the indications of detriment to the health and appearance in persons actually labouring under sickness, and those in love, are similar in both cases without any perceptible difference, is a fact notorious to every body ; and, reader, you might well have imagined, judging from the alteration in her countenance, the paleness of her cheeks, the languor of her eyes, her tottering knees, her disturbed sleep, and her sighs, that through the slowness of the torment were impetuous and frequent, that her complaint was simply to be attributed to the usual alternations of a fever. But alas for the obtuse heads of her doctors,—she also wept! Whence then the hurried pulse, the unusual flush, the laboured respiration, the incessant tossings and turnings from side to side? Why, good gods, let any one learned in love and experienced in its sensations see the mind rather than the body overwhelmed

* The passage of which the above well-known lines of Dr. Jackson are a sufficiently near translation is as follows:—" At ubi completis igne vesano totis præcordiis, immodicè bacchatus amor exæstuabat."

with raging inflammation; and how easily comprehensible were the distinction, although he be nothing of a doctor!

While such was the state of the love-sick stepmother, her silence, long protracted, becoming more and more unbearable, and the concealment of the real cause of her malady no longer possible owing to the continual presence of the numerous attendants, the awful secret made its way at last to her son-in-law, who, the moment the intelligence was conveyed to him, determined to escape from the dreadful hurricane of fortune, and by instant flight seek shelter from the disgrace that threatened himself and his family. Accordingly, fortified in his resolve by the corroborative advice of an able and aged counsellor who once had been his tutor, he departed from his father's domicile without more ado. When the unexpected news of the young man's departure reached the ears of the stepmother, her turbulent impatience of his absence immediately stimulated her to revenge, and with extraordinary precipitancy hurried her from love's topmost height to the lowest abyss of hatred. Having made the discovery that her son-in-law had taken refuge at a certain distant farm in the country belonging to his father, she forthwith commenced the execution of a nefarious plot against his life, and for that purpose summoned to her presence a reprobate old slave who had lived with her before her marriage, and formed a portion of her dowry. Considering the readiest manner of attaining her object to be through the means of poison, she com-

municated her perfidious designs without ceremony to the villain her attendant, who accordingly, being a person previously hardened to all manner of wickedness, procured a drug of the most deadly quality for the purpose. Having returned with a poison of certain and instantaneous power, the stepmother, intent on destroying the life of her guileless relative, infused it in a cup of wine with insane impatience; and anxious and over eager to have the fatal draught ready prepared beforehand, left the diluted mixture to await the hoped for opportunity. While the mistress and her slave were secretly laying their heads together, and consulting upon the most appropriate method of administering the potion to their victim, the younger boy, the real son of the nefarious woman, who, after the laborious studies of the morning, had returned home and eaten his dinner, being thirsty, and totally ignorant of the plot against his brother, happening by chance to perceive the cup that contained the poison, took hold of it and swallowing the entire contents at a draught, imbibed the death intended for his elder brother, and dropped instantly lifeless on the ground.

The sudden and unexpected death of the youth terrified the tutor beyond measure, who uttered such loud and lamentable cries that he alarmed the whole family; while amid the numerous assemblage, so soon as the noxious beverage was discovered to be the cause of the fatal calamity, various were the different opinions and presumptions relating to the authors of the execrable deed.

Meanwhile the wicked woman, a singular specimen of a malignant stepmother,—unmoved at the shocking death of her child, unsmitten by her own infanticidal conscience, alike callous to the misfortunes and grief of her husband, and the melancholy preparations for the funeral, but on the contrary wholly absorbed in her thirst of vengeance,—meditated the further destruction of her family. Accordingly, with infinite effrontery, she told her husband, whose return home, being absent at the moment at a little distance, she had hastened by the dispatch of a messenger, that her son-in-law, previous to his flight, had administered the fatal potion to the youth his brother, and having been detected by herself in the commission of the act, had threatened to kill her with a sword.

The unhappy father seeing, on his return home, the funeral rites of his younger son performing before his face, and not only having to lament the death of his younger but to bewail the loss of his elder son also, was unable to withstand the tempest of his misfortunes, and entirely overwhelmed with grief. Stimulated by the treacherous lamentations of a wife still dear to him, and conscious that his elder son must forfeit his life for the crime of fratricide, his natural love for his surviving offspring changed to utter hatred. The wretched old man accordingly, so soon as the pompous funeral ceremonies of his deceased son were concluded, while the tears were yet wet upon his cheeks, and his white hair still begrimed with dirty ashes, proceeded straight from the funeral

pile to the forum. There, ignorant of the treachery of his wicked wife, throwing himself at the feet of the decurions, he denounced the only son that remained to him, not only as the murderer of his brother, but as a fratricide, who also had made an attempt to assassinate his stepmother. Weeping, beseeching, and exerting his passionate feelings to their utmost force against the accused, such was the degree of commiseration he excited among the senate, and such the indignation aroused by the pathetic expression of his sorrow, that the sensation, speedily communicated to the people, increased gradually to such a pitch that, becoming impatient of the tedious formality of establishing the accusation on incontestable proof, and conducting the criminal's defence through the premeditated and tortuous windings of the advocate, they shouted loudly and simultaneously, "Let the public inflict the punishment for a public crime. Let us stone him to death!" Upon this the magistrates, apprehensive on their own account, and fearing lest the public indignation proceeding from a small beginning might end in the destruction of order and in downright sedition, partly conciliating the decurions, and partly exerting their influence by all means in their power to pacify the people, implored that the trial might be allowed to proceed in a regular manner after the forms of their ancestors. So that the allegations of both parties being heard alike, and a sentence conformable to the civil law being duly pronounced, no one might in a time of profound peace be

condemned without a hearing, nor a dire example of barbaric ferocity and the weakness of the governing authorities be handed down to posterity.

The latter sound advice having been received with general satisfaction, the crier was immediately commanded to convene a meeting of the senate. Upon which exclaimed the crier aloud, "Let the senators assemble in the senate house." The senators, in obedience to the proclamation, having entered the building, and each having taken the proper place according to his rank, the crier, again exclaiming in a loud voice, bade the accuser stand forth. In like manner the criminal was also summoned by the proclamation of the crier, who then finally, after the custom of the law of Athens, as practised at the Areopagus, exhorted the advocates on both sides to commence their pleadings without superfluous preamble, and in a tone void of appeal to the feelings for commiseration.

That such was the manner of proceeding on the occasion in question, I learnt from overhearing the conversation of very many people; though so far as regards the precise words of the orators, the extent of their speeches, the gist of their altercations; how the advocate of the accuser stirred up a conflagration, and how the advocate of the criminal extinguished the fire that the other created; all these are matters that, reader, I, having been all the time absent and tied up to my manger, cannot possibly inform thee. Confining myself, therefore, to the facts I was duly informed of, I am never-

theless enabled to state for thy edification that, so soon as the speakers on both sides had concluded their arguments, the senators being unwilling to decide a question of such importance on mere suspicion and conjecture, determined that the truth of the accusation should be made manifest by certain testimony, and, above all things, ordered the slave of the step-mother, who was believed by common report to be cognizant of her criminality, to be brought forward and examined.

The villain being accordingly produced and interrogated, evinced notwithstanding no manner of fear or trepidation; but, unawed by the impending serious consequences of the investigation, and the thronged appearance of the senate-house, or, at least, callous to the remonstrances of his own guilty conscience, persisted in asserting a string of his own sheer inventions precisely as if he were telling the truth. "The young man," he said, "indignant at the conduct of his step-mother, and eager to revenge her treatment of him, had summoned him, the witness, to his presence, and commanded him to put her son to death." He farther added, "that the young man offered him a large sum of money to ensure his secrecy; and on his refusal to perform the act, threatened to put him to death." Moreover, "that he gave him poison that he had mixed with his own hand to be administered to his half-brother, which he having delayed to do, the other, fearing his intention was to produce the potion in evidence against him, subsequently gave it to

his half-brother himself." All the above facts were stated by the scoundrel with such an extraordinary degree of plausibility and affected agitation, that the trial was immediately brought to a conclusion, and sentence pronounced against the young man. Neither did a single one of the decurions raise an objection in his favour, but all and every one of them unanimously condemned him to be sewn up in a sack, and thrown into the sea. Notwithstanding, however, their unanimity, they were proceeding, according to invariable custom, to deposit each his written billet bearing the fate of the criminal written upon it, in a brazen urn,—after which act the life of the criminal is put forthwith into the hands of the executioner beyond the reach of appeal,—when an old physician, of well-tried probity and remarkable influence in the city, who happened to be in the senate-house among the spectators, suddenly stepped forward and placed his hand upon the aperture of the brazen urn. Thus having prevented the possibility of a billet being placed in it by any person whatever, he addressed the court as follows:—

"During the course of a long life," said he, "having had the satisfaction of gaining the approbation of my fellow-citizens, I cannot patiently submit to see the crime of homicide manifestly committed, an innocent person arraigned on a false accusation, and yourselves, through the artifices of a lying slave, induced to falsify those judgments in which all of you are strictly bounden by your oaths to render strict justice. Neither, on the

other hand, am I capable of trampling on the religion of the gods, and deceiving my own conscience by making a rash, unadvised statement; but listen, and I will relate to you what are the real circumstances of the case now on trial before you. That villainous slave, some days ago, came to me, and wanted to buy some deadly poison, which he said a certain person had occasion for, who, being afflicted with a lingering incurable disease, was desirous of ridding himself of life that had become a torment. I gave him a potion at the price of a hundred golden solidi; but perceiving from the rapid utterance and inconsistent language of the reprobate that he had a wicked object in contemplation, and foreseeing that a future question might arise out of the transaction, I took the precaution of saying to him, instead of receiving outright the money he had agreed to pay, 'Tis possible that the gold thou hast brought with thee may be light in weight or adulterated. Put, therefore, the pieces into this bag, and seal the bag with thy seal, and to-morrow shall the money be sent to the money-changer, and put to the proof.' The slave agreed to what I said, and accordingly sealed the bag with the impression of his seal; and this same bag, the moment I saw him brought into court to give his testimony, I directed one of my people to go to my shop as fast as he could possibly run, and bring hither immediately. Behold, here it is. I now produce it to confront him before his face. Let him look at it; let him examine the impression of his own seal; and then

let him explain how the accused party can be made answerable for the poison that he himself bought."

At this moment a violent fit of trembling seized the culprit, his countenance was overspread by a deadly, scarcely human paleness, and all his limbs were suffused by a cold perspiration. Resting in irregular alternations, first on one foot and then on the other, scratching his head now on this side and again on that, and muttering a parcel of unintelligible words with his mouth gaping half open; such was his appearance that not a single person in the court had the least doubt of his guilt. Notwithstanding, recovering ere long his former craftiness, he persisted to deny the fact most strenuously, and affirmed that the doctor had told a lie. The doctor finding his character impeached by the villain in public, and stimulated by the sense of his religious obligation, multiplied his arguments, and used all the means in his power to confute the imputation cast upon him, while the magistrates ordered the officers of the court to seize the hand of the slave and compare the impression of the seal on the money bag with the iron ring on his finger. The suspicion previously entertained being fully corroborated by the experiment, the senators instantly resolved to put the culprit to the torture. Accordingly the necessary implements used according to the custom of the Greeks, namely, the wheel, the wooden horse, etc., having been previously ready on the spot, the torture was immediately administered to him before all the spectators.

Hardened, however, by wonderful obstinacy, he bore the stripes, and all the torments, nay, even the application of the red-hot irons without wincing or flinching. Upon which, exclaimed the doctor, "I will not suffer this young man, no, by Hercules, I will not suffer him to receive a punishment at your hands contrary to justice, nor allow yon villain to escape the penalty of his crime, and make a laughing stock of your tribunals. But listen and I will fortify the truth of my allegation by another convincing proof.

"When he asked me for the deadly poison, I felt fully sensible, since the use of medicine is to preserve life and not destroy it, that it was inconsistent with my profession to furnish him with the means of producing death; but at the same time I considered that were I to decline to give what he required, my unreasonable refusal would prompt him to another method of committing the crime. For he might have got the poison elsewhere, or have had recourse to a sword or other such weapon to attain his object. Accordingly I gave him a poisonous though not mortal potion, composed of mandrake, celebrated for producing a heavy continuous state of somnolency, a trance equal in appearance to very death itself. Now, therefore, notwithstanding that that most desperate of criminals, certain, had he confessed, of undergoing the utmost penalty of the law, as ordained by our ancestors, bore bravely as the lighter evil the tortures inflicted just now upon him; yet, nevertheless, you have now the means of knowing to a

certainty whether the potion administered were the same that I mixed with my own hands or not. For if it be the same, the lad is still alive, and rests and sleeps; nay presently, about this very hour, will be shaking off his torpid state, and return to the light of day. If, on the contrary, his life be thoroughly extinguished—if he be actually dead—why then, forsooth, you may adopt any farther means you think proper to investigate the cause of his decease." The above address of the doctor being received with universal approbation, there arose immediately a general rush of people hurrying with the utmost haste out of the senate house to the sepulchre, where the body of the youth, supposed to be deceased, was deposited. Such was the impetuous degree of curiosity among them, that not a single person remained behind, but all the spectators, including persons of first rank, people of the middle classes, senators and all, burst forth together in a troop.

And now behold the father of the youth had no sooner, with his own hands, removed the lid of the receptacle where his son was laid, than the latter, just recovered from his death-like trance, and arisen as it were from the dead, was tenderly embraced by his aged parent, who, overcome with joyful ecstasy, and unable to give utterance to words capable of expressing his emotion, assisted him on his feet, and presented him to all the people. Then, the father having straightway led his son, covered as he

was with the grave-clothes closely wrapped about his body, to the senate-house, the crimes of the wicked slave, and the iniquity of the still more wicked mistress, were fully and clearly developed. And now when the naked truth stood exposed before all the people, the step-mother was condemned to perpetual banishment, the slave was crucified, the good doctor, in consequence of the happy result of the trance he had produced, was rewarded with the hundred golden solidi, and the fortunes of the old man, the father, were conducted to a remarkable and romantic termination by divine Providence. For he who, a moment before, had been doomed to feel the agony of a total bereavement of his children, now,—within the smallest possible particle of time, a very speck as it were of duration,—found himself all of a sudden the once more happy father of two fine young men.

END OF NINTH EPISODE.

While the circumstances of the above tale were in progress, I, for my part, was also subject to various undulations of the waves of fate. The soldier who, though nobody sold me, had contrived to buy me, and though he paid nothing for me had made me his pro-

perty, having received an order to proceed with letters addressed to the great prince at Rome, sold me, previous to departing in obedience to the command, for the sum of eleven denarii. My new purchasers were two brothers, both the servants of a certain very rich man, who jointly lived together in their master's house in the neighbourhood. One was employed as confectioner, to bake bread and make sweetmeats; the other was cook, who concocted rich gravies, and stewed the mincemeats and hashes over the fire. Being thus members of the same household, they occupied the same apartment, and lived a life in common with one another, and they were induced to buy me for a beast of burden to carry the various pots, kettles, and other utensils they had need of when their master left his home on a journey through the provinces. For my part, I had never since I was a jackass experienced such a degree of benevolence from Fortune as while I lived with these two brothers, for they actually treated me like one of themselves, and as a third companion. Besides, my masters used every evening to bring home from their lord's table to our apartment numerous fragments of the very splendid, sumptuous entertainment, such as pieces of roast-pig, fish, poultry, savoury dishes in abundance, bread, cakes, sugar-plums, sweetmeats, and all manner of beautiful candies. With all which dainties, whenever my masters went to the bath every evening, and locked me up alone in the apartment, I used to fill my belly most gloriously.

For I was hardly such a fool, or rather such an ass in grain, on seeing such delicate morsels sent from heaven as it were on purpose that I might eat them, as to leave a sweet repast, and sup upon harsh hay.

For a very considerable time all these thievish manœuvres succeeded charmingly, particularly as at first, being timid and cautious, I was accordingly careful to select a little here, and a little there, from among the kinds that happened to be the most abundant; so that my masters, especially as they had no idea of an ass playing any such a trick, never missed the articles. But when, through continued success, the fear of detection became diminished, and, rejecting everything coarse and stale, I recklessly licked up the sweetmeats and devoured the prime portions exclusively, then did Suspicion pierce the hearts of the two brothers with her pungent sting. For never imagining it possible that I was the perpetrator of the deed in question, while all the time their losses happened regularly every day, mutual distrust began to arise between them, and each in secret believed the other guilty of the most base description of robbery. Meanwhile they continually kept an accurate account of everything, and exerted their energies more and more, in hopes of discovering the offender; till one at last, departing from the reserve that both had hitherto maintained, thus addressed the other: "Verily," said he, "thy conduct is neither like a man nor a brother! Thus to increase thy share of our perquisites by cribbing the greater

portion, and then making an equal division with myself of the remainder! Let us dissolve our agreement, forsooth, provided thou art not content with the terms of our partnership; and, at all events, live as brothers. Otherwise no one can say when the discord arising between us on account of our continual losses may come to a termination." "Why," replied the other, "by Hercules, I admire thy impudence, thus to accuse me, and be the first to pick a quarrel about things thou hast stolen thyself; while I, on the contrary, for a very long period, have been lamenting the loss in silence, rather than make up my mind to accuse thee, my brother, of such shabby pilfering. Well is it, at all events, that thou hast spoken thy mind freely, or a privy grudge might have arisen between us, and both, forsooth, instigated to a lofty pitch of fraternal contention, like Eteocles and Polynices, might have fallen victims." The bickerings between the brothers having been carried on in the above strain for some time longer, while each solemnly declared to the other that he had purloined nothing at all, nor been guilty of any manner of fraud, they at last came to a mutual determination to lay their heads together, and use all manner of contrivances to discover the robber of their common property. "For," said they, "although there is no living creature in the room except the ass, and asses are not given to eat the things we speak of, yet notwithstanding the choicest morsels disappear every day. Neither can it be flies that devour such masses

of dainties, for of flies so big as the Harpies of old, that robbed Phineus of his dinner, there are none now-a-days."

While matters were thus proceeding, I, for my part, procured an excellent supper every night, and my paunch was fully distended with human food. My body became plump and fat; my skin, well lined with tallow, grew soft and sleek; and my coat, thus flourishing by generous nutriment, began to shine gloriously. But this comeliness of appearance was the means of raising a suspicion of the propriety of my behaviour; for my ameliorated condition, and especially the breadth of my back, astonished my masters, who perceiving at the same time that my hay remained untouched every day, directed accordingly their entire attention to watch my proceedings. In pursuance of which determination, the next evening, instead of going to the bath at the usual hour, they waited outside our apartment, after they had locked the door, and peeping through a crevice in one of the planks while, with outstretched neck, I was busily munching the provisions that lay exposed in all parts of the room, they detected me in the very fact. Wonderstruck at the monstrosity before their eyes,—an ass feeding on savoury meats and human victuals,—they immediately fell into a fit of laughing ready to burst their sides, and, entirely regardless of their loss, called in, first one of their fellow-servants, and then another, till finally the greater part of the household were assembled to

view the wonderful spectacle. While thus engaged, and observing to one another the gluttonous appetite of an animal of so sluggish disposition, their laughter was so loud, so general, and lasted for so long a time, that the lord of the establishment, who happened to be passing by at the moment, was attracted to the spot in consequence. Inquiring what pleasant occurrence had excited risibility among his household, and being told the reason, he too, together with the others, put his eye to the door, and spying through the cranny, was so exceedingly delighted at what he saw, that he actually laughed till his bowels ached. At last he ordered the door of the apartment to be opened, and coming into the room, stood close, and observed me very attentively. Meanwhile, the merriment of the people about me inspired me with additional confidence, so that, imagining that one side at least of Fortune's countenance had begun to smile on me, I steadily ate on without feeling disturbed in the least.

Finally, the lord of the household became so exhilarated at the novelty of my performance, that he determined to introduce me, nay, actually with his own hands conducted me into the supper-room, and ordered from the table, which was already laid, all manner of things good to eat to be placed before me. Provided accordingly with meats uncut, and dishes that no one yet had tasted, I fell to work at everything they offered me as if I were really hungry, although, in

fact, my belly was nearly as full as it would hold already. But I was thus desirous to please the lord of the household, and gain his approbation, while the guests, on their part, scrupulously selecting everything the most likely to be abhorrent to the taste of a jack-ass, gave me, as if on purpose to put my politeness to the test, meat seasoned with assafœtida, fat fowls highly peppered, fish soused in foreign sauces, &c. At last a buffoon, who sat at table among the guests, exclaimed, while the whole company were in a roar of laughter, "A drop to drink for our comrade. Give him a cup of wine." Upon which, the lord, approving the buffoon's proposal, replied, "Right said, rogue; well hast thou spoken to the purpose; verily, our companion may take it kindly; nay, have no objection to the wine, though 'twere mulled. Ho! boy," continued he, addressing himself to the servant, "take yon gold cup; be sure thou rinse it carefully, and fill it with wine well mulled. Then offer the cup to my parasite, and, harkye, tell him I drink to his good health." All the while the boy was preparing the wine as his master bade him, the guests remained in a state of intense curiosity to witness the result of the experiment; though I was not alarmed in the least degree; but, notwithstanding the vessel was a very large one, the moment the cup was brought to me, I very quietly and deliberately, screwing the extremities of my lips about my tongue, swallowed the whole of its contents at a draught. Upon which a general shout of

applause resounded round the table, and immediately all the guests joined simultaneously in drinking my health.

The lord of the household was now so thoroughly overwhelmed with delight at my accomplishments, that having summoned to his presence the two servants who had bought me, he ordered a sum of money to be given them equal to four times the price they had paid for me, and then had me delivered over to the charge of one of his freedmen whom he held in especial favour, and who lived in the neighbourhood in easy circumstances. This person, in pursuance of the earnest instructions given him to take great care of me, treated me with extraordinary humanity, and fed me with the very best of everything. He moreover took much pains, in order to deserve the better of his patron, and contribute to his amusement, to teach me many clever tricks. For example, first, he taught me to place myself in a reclining position at table, leaning on my elbow, and afterwards to pretend to be fighting with an adversary and paw and strike out with my fore feet. Also to rear up, and dance upon my hind feet, while my fore feet were elevated high in the air. But what of all gained me the most admiration was the manner he showed me to express my wants and preferences by signs instead of words. Thus to testify my approval of anything, or give an answer in the affirmative, I tossed up my head. If I had occasion to give a negative, I held my head low down. If I was thirsty, I looked

towards the butler, and to show I wanted something to drink, winked my eyelids at him alternately one after another.

All these manœuvres I could, to say the truth, have performed, and a great deal more into the bargain, without any instructions at all, but I was afraid to do such things of my own accord without the aid of a master; for I thought that the performance, being viewed in the light of an evil omen, I might be regarded as a monstrous prodigy, and my fattened carcase thrown, with its throat cut, to the vultures. Meanwhile fame spread abroad my renown among the people, and my reputation was daily increasing. I was accounted, in short, a creature that by his sagacity had already rendered his master a person of distinguished notoriety. "For," said the people, "here is a man forsooth who hath an ass his guest and companion, an ass that wrestles, an ass that dances, an ass that plays all manner of tricks, an ass that understands all that is said to him, and an ass that clearly expresses by signs all he desires to say."

But, reader, before I go further, 'tis fit I should do now what I ought to have done in the beginning, acquaint thee who this new master of mine was, and whence he came.

The name of the lord of the household to whom I belonged was Thyasus, and his native place Corinth, the principal city in Achaia. Having already arrived at the various grades of civic honours and fulfilled the

several appointments successively step by step, he at last, at the time in question, had been nominated one of the quinquennial magistrates,—a dignity to which, as well by reason of his family distinction as his social position, he was duly entitled. Accordingly, on such a signal occasion of aggrandisement, being desirous of doing something worthy the importance of the new office, and extending his liberality to the utmost pitch, he engaged to indulge the public with a gladiatorial spectacle of three days' duration. He had therefore come to Thessaly on public grounds entirely, for the express purpose of purchasing the most noble specimens of wild beasts, and the most celebrated gladiators; and now having completed his collection, and arranged to his satisfaction all the preliminaries of his entertainment, he was about to retrace his steps back to Corinth without more ado.

At last, all preparations for his return home being completed, I was decorated by my master's orders with a coloured saddle, covered with purple cloth and golden trappings, an embroidered surcingle, a silver bit, and abundance of little tinkling bells hung about me, and thus caparisoned for the journey was brought forth on the morning of our departure. And now my master, regardless of his splendid Thessalian horses, and Gallican steeds, whose generous pedigree entailed value and dignity on their progeny, and disdaining to occupy any one of his many beautiful carriages or chariots which, some covered and others open, followed in the rear of

the cavalcade, mounted on my back instead, and all the way we went talked to me very lovingly—declaring particularly, among various similar kindly expressions, how truly happy he considered himself, to be the possessor of a creature not only capable of bearing him on its back like a beast of burden, but which also served for his companion. After travelling for some days successively and completing our journey partly by land and partly by sea, we arrived at Corinth, the place of our destination. On our approach the citizens assembled about us in vast numbers; not so much, as it then appeared to my judgment, for the sake of rendering due honor to my master Thyasus, as desirous of seeing myself. Indeed, such was the eagerness with which the people, anxious to behold the performance of my tricks, crowded together and exerted themselves, for the purpose of obtaining their object gratis, that my master, considering that during the subsequent period of our sojourn in the city he might make me a source of considerable emolument, ordered the door of my stable to be locked, and admitting one person at a time, separately, at a good round price of admission, raked together, by such means, a large sum of money every day. Especially a fashionable and wealthy Greek lady, who among the rest of the people attended to witness my performances, took a wonderful fancy to me, and delighted with my ludicrous tricks would fain have had me sent to her house for a private representation. But my master had disposed otherwise of my

services, and having paid to the freedman, my instructor, a large additional sum of money, over and above the price at which he bought me, determined to produce me as one of the public performers of the amphitheatre, at the ensuing spectacle.

Meanwhile this resolution of my master was the source to me of no trifling degree of uneasiness, and in the intermediate period, awaiting the day of the festival, great indeed was my anxiety, destitute as I was of human hands, feet, toes, and fingers, and with nought to serve my purpose but round solid hoofs, how I might ultimately acquit myself. But my sadness was continually illuminated by a slender ray of hope, and my spirit was comforted by a pleasing anticipation that at last my sufferings were about to be brought to a speedy termination. For spring, thought I, ere long, beginning to dawn, so soon as the trees are decked with purple blossoms, and the meadows clothed with their flowery mantle, roses bursting in glittering splendour from their thorny cells and scenting with their spicy odours the ambient air, will dissolve the enchantment of Lucius, and restore him to his proper form.

At last, after several days were consumed in the eagerness of expectation, the first day of the public spectacle duly arrived, and I was conducted to the amphitheatre with much pomp and ceremony. Thither I was accompanied by a vast concourse of people, and having arrived at the entrance was made to remain outside the gate, until the ludicrous scenic representa-

tions and the dances, which composed the first portion of the entertainment, were concluded. There for a little while, not only had I an opportunity of greedily feeding on the fine green fresh grass that grew upon the spot, but as the door or gate was open I had the pleasure also of refreshing my inquisitive eyes with an agreeable view of the proceedings within. Wherefore, reader, will I endeavour to give thee also an idea of the spectacle.

In the first place then, I beheld the Grecian Pyrrhic dance performed by a numerous band of youths and damsels, all in the flower of their age, and conspicuous for their beauty. Clad in glittering dresses and moving with graceful gesticulation according to a regular pre-arranged figure, sometimes they struck off in a circle, twisting and twining their bodies as they whirled round and round, joined hand in hand; then they would form a double row that meeting at one extremity assumed the appearance of a wedge; whence again they would change the figure to a hollow square; and afterwards breaking off and separating into two troops, they continued their various reciprocal evolutions, their repeated turnings and windings, until suddenly, at the sound of a trumpet, all came to a termination.

So soon as the dancing was over, preparations were immediately commenced for a dramatic spectacle, representing the "Judgment of Paris." Accordingly, when the curtain was removed and the hangings folded, the object that at first sight appeared in full view was

the celebrated Mount Ida, immortalized by the poet Homer. A wooden structure of considerable height and magnitude was contrived with precise similitude, by the hand of the artist, covered with living trees and real turf, whence a few goats were to be seen here and there clipping the herbage. From the summit a fountain discharged its waters downwards in a rivulet. There, also, was to be seen Paris the Phrygian shepherd, a youth clad in the beautiful national costume, whose short barbaric cloak hung flowing over his shoulders, and whose head was encompassed by a golden tiara.

While Paris, thus attired, appeared to be guarding his flock, next came another handsome youth, conspicuous for the abundance of his flowing flaxen hair, and uncovered, save with the mantle of a stripling thrown lightly across his left shoulder. From among his hair protruded a small pair of golden wings, which wings, together with his wand and caduceus, proclaimed him to be Mercury. Bearing in his hand an apple covered with gold leaf, and tripping lightly forward with the step of a dancer, he approached and offered the apple to Paris. Which done, and having expressed with graceful action the commands of Jupiter, he gave it him, and gracefully retracing his steps whence he came, forthwith made his exit.

When Mercury had departed, the next personage of the drama that made her appearance was Juno, personated by a damsel of a noble countenance, bearing in

her hand a sceptre, and wearing a white diadem upon her head.

Juno was followed by another female figure, whom, by her bouncing gait, reader, thou wouldst at once have recognized to be Minerva. A shining helmet covered her head, an olive leaf crown encircled the helmet; and as she advanced with elevated shield, she brandished her spear as in the moment of battle.

Third and last advanced a young beauty; the divine hue of whose features and exquisite symmetrical form proclaimed to be Venus. Such was the heavenly whiteness of her skin, imperfectly concealed by a scarf of ocean-blue and slight transparent texture, which the sportive breeze dispersed abroad in fluttering folds, that one would have thought her newly risen from the waves.

All the above mentioned Goddesses were respectively accompanied by their attendants. And now Juno, waited upon by two juvenile actors, representing Castor and Pollux, wearing on their heads round helmets remarkable for a cluster of stars on the summit, advancing towards the shepherd youth in accordance with pathetic modulations of the flute, expressed herself by tranquil unaffected gestures, as if to solicit of Paris the palm of beauty, and promise him as a reward dominion over the entire Asiatic territory. Next came the warlike Goddess Minerva, likewise attended by two boys representing Terror and Fear, her arm-bearers, leaping with drawn swords in their hands as they

advanced. Then followed a piper, sounding a warlike Doric melody upon an instrument which, mingling a heavy buzzing sound with the sharp blast of a trumpet,* excited the vigorous agility of the dancers to an extraordinary degree. Restlessly turning her head from side to side, and darting fierce glances from her eyes, Minerva, advancing with a hurried excited gait, appeared to promise Paris the renown of bravery and splendid trophies of war, provided victory in the contest of beauty were her own.

But, finally, lo and behold Venus advances with a sweet smile overspreading her countenance, and greeted by loud shouts of applause from the spectators in the cavea, stands in a still, graceful attitude in the middle of the stage! The Goddess was surrounded by a multitude of merry little boys, whom from their tiny plump, milkwhite limbs, thou wouldst not only have pronounced to be Cupids—such was the perfect resemblance of their wings, their bows and arrows, their quivers and their torches, which, as if to illuminate their mistress at a nuptial banquet, they carried before her—but Cupids real and divine, either just risen from the sea or dropped down from heaven. In addition to the Cupids were also a numerous assemblage of unmarried damsels of a lovely race, some belonging to the family of the fascinating Graces, and others of the jocund Hours, all of whom throwing at the feet of their

* Hence perhaps the origin of the bagpipe.

mistress loose flowers and nosegays, the offerings of spring, propitiated the Queen of Love and Beauty with an artistical dance. Moreover, presently, while the hearts of the spectators were charmed with the sound of Lydian measures played on the pipes pierced with many holes, Venus more sweetly still began to put her limbs in motion and respond to the music by her gestures. Bending her head by degrees, slowly increasing in accordance with the soft delicate tones of the pipes, and with a gentle sinuous motion of the spine advancing with slow and hesitating steps, she no sooner had approached close to Paris,—darting piercing glances from her eyes, whose pupils at one moment appeared to leap from their sockets, and at another were languishingly half concealed,—than she seemed by the movement of her arms to promise him a damsel of remarkable beauty like herself, provided he gave her the preference. Whereupon, instantly and with a willing heart, the Phrygian youth extended to her the golden apple he held in his hand in token of victory.

Here then is a lesson for you all, ye vilest of the human race, ye forensic cattle, ye vultures clad in gowns. How can you be surprised that the sentences of all our judges now-a-days are venal, when you perceive that even the great Jupiter, in a question agitated between Gods and men, elected in his council a rustic shepherd as a judge; and the shepherd, for the sake of female beauty, consigned the whole of his kindred to perdition? Aye, and by Hercules many of

the judgments of more modern times are not less heinous. Did not the celebrated leaders of the Greeks, for example, allow Palamedes, renowned for wisdom and learning, to fall a sacrifice to false accusations, and condemn him to death as a traitor? And did not they again award the arms of Achilles to the mendicant Ulysses in contempt of the greatest and most powerful of warriors, Ajax? Finally, did not the Athenians, those cautious, prudent lawgivers, and masters of all the sciences, destroy the life of an aged philosopher of divine sagacity, whom even the Delphic Oracle pronounced the wisest of mankind? Did not they, through the envy and treachery of an infamous faction, suffer him who had restrained as with a bridle the excesses of the youth, to be accused of corrupting the morals of the country, and poison him with an herb, whose noxious pestilential juice has for ever branded them with the indelible stain of ignominy—him whose name is venerated, and sect esteemed the most conducive to consummate happiness, by the most egregious philosophers of the present day? But, reader, lest, calling me to account for this outburst of indignation, thou mayest exclaim, "'Tis a thing unbearable to hear an ass preach philosophy!" I will relinquish my digression and return whence I departed to my story.

So soon as Paris had delivered his judgment, Juno and Minerva retired vexed and angry from the stage, showing by appropriate gestures indignation at their repulse. Venus on the contrary testifying her joy by

gaiety and merriment, joined the choir of dancers; while lo and behold at the same instant a jet of vinous fluid tinged with saffron burst forth from a concealed tube on the summit of the mountain, and rising to a considerable height, sprinkled on its descent the backs of the white goats with an odoriferous shower, that tinging their coats with yellow, improved their beauty and diffused its fragrance over the entire space of the cavea. Then, as if swallowed up in a chasm of the earth, the whole mountain disappeared.

And now the dramatic performances being entirely concluded, preparations were immediately commenced within the amphitheatre for a spectacle of another description. A female criminal recently condemned by the sentence of the Prefect to be thrown before wild beasts to be devoured, was about to be brought to execution. But, reader, here it behoves me, before I proceed farther, to give thee some account of the circumstances that led to this woman's condemnation, which circumstances, so far as the story came to my knowledge, are as follows:—

TENTH EPISODE.

A WOMAN CONDEMNED TO BE THROWN TO WILD BEASTS.

A certain man, about to depart from home on a journey, commanded his wife, who was daily expecting to be brought to bed, to put the infant to death, provided it happened to be a female. The husband had also by the same wife a grown up son, who about that time had married the wretched woman whose deeds are about to be related. The husband departed on his way, and his wife gave birth to a daughter; but influenced by maternal affection, and declining to obey the instructions her husband had given her, she instead placed the infant in the care of one of her neighbours to be brought up privately. On the return of the husband from his travels she told him she had had a daughter, and had killed it. Meanwhile the child grew up and thrived in secret, until, arrived at woman's estate and in the flower of her age, her mother was desirous of disposing of her in matrimony. Unable without the cognisance of her husband to provide the damsel with a dowry suitable to her birth, but determining to acquit herself under existing circumstances to the best of her ability, she communicated the secret to her married son, and acquainted him of the existence of his

sister. The young man, remarkable for the piety of his disposition, fulfilled his filial and fraternal obligation in a manner conformable with his character, and preserved the secret of his noble house that had been confided to him, even from his own wife; but at the same time, yielding to the impulse arising from the ties of consanguinity, he persuaded her, on the pretence of a feeling of common humanity, to receive the damsel into her house as an orphan child without either father or mother. Subsequently he bestowed her in marriage with a liberal dowry on an intimate friend of his own.

Hitherto the manœuvre that had been arranged and conducted throughout with the most scrupulous propriety had succeeded admirably; when alas, cruel fortune, from whom there is no escaping, directed the deadly glance of jealousy towards the young man's household. His wife accordingly beginning at first to entertain distrust of the new married damsel, ultimately concluded her to be a rival; and her suspicions speedily increasing to a feeling of detestation, her hatred at last arrived at such a pitch that she determined to deprive her of her life. Accordingly she had recourse to the following wicked stratagem. Betaking herself to a farm of her husband's in the country, she summoned to her presence a slave of a character, though she could depend upon him herself, most foreign to fidelity; and bade him go to the young damsel and request her immediately to come thither,

for that a certain young man, she bade him say, was desirous to see her; and requested her to hasten thither alone, unattended by any companion. Moreover the wicked woman gave the slave a ring which she stole from her husband, on purpose to show to the damsel, in order that the slave, by giving his story the appearance of truth, might the more readily induce her to come. The young damsel, observing the impression on the ring, and knowing it belonged to her brother, was readily taken by the bait laid for her with such infinite treachery, and falling at once into the snare, obeyed the instructions given her, and forthwith without hesitation hurried to the appointed place without a companion. The egregious wife, having got in her power the sister of her husband, being stung by jealousy to a furious pitch of madness, subjected her imagined rival to the most cruel torments, and, in ignorance of the relationship, notwithstanding that with her dying lips the other revealed the secret of her birth and education, and repeatedly called upon the name of her brother, relentlessly put her to death.

A messenger having announced the awful tidings of her death to the young men, the husband and the brother of the deceased, they both arrived at the spot without delay, and, sanctifying the funeral obsequies with most bitter lamentations, consigned her body to the sepulchre. Which done, her brother, unable to sustain the grief inflicted by the untimely fate of a sister occasioned by a person who ought, of all others in

the world, to be the last to harm her, so took her death to heart, that a violent overflowing of noxious bile ensued, and threw him into a burning raging fever. Upon this the wife, though she had long since relinquished the title to the name of wife by her treachery, immediately went to a physician of notorious perfidy, a man who, a foe to human life, had numbered many a trophy in the struggle against nature, and whose right hand had oft times won the victory. Of him she demanded a poison of instantaneous power, and on promise of the payment of fifty sesterces obtained the drug she required, and thus in other words purchased the object of her wishes—the death of her husband. And now the wife, accompanied by the doctor, betook themselves to the chamber where the sick man lay; and pretending they had brought with them a celebrated potion to which the epithet "sacred" had been applied by the learned in consequence of its excellent qualities for composing the stomach and removing the bile,—though, in fact, if it were sacred at all it was rather sacred to the interests of Proserpine,—the doctor, in the presence of several relatives and friends of the family, having first well stirred the contents of the cup with his own hand, extended it to the patient.

At this moment the audacious woman, eager to possess herself of the money she had agreed to give for the potion, and at the same time rid herself of an accomplice in her crime, took the cup out of the doctor's hand, and addressing him before all the persons present,

"Best of doctors," said she, "prudent and learned as thou art, it surely cannot offend thee that a wife, religiously anxious for the recovery of her husband, require of thee, as an indispensable act of piety, to make experiment of thy remedy. For how otherwise can I know that the cup in thy hand doth not contain noxious poison mixed with the beverage? I cannot therefore allow thee, nay, thou shalt not present it to the best of husbands till thou thyself hast swallowed a good portion of it." The doctor, on hearing these words of the truculent woman, became all of a sudden so staggered and confounded at the desperation of the act, that, taken aback without time for reflection, and being momentarily deprived of his senses from apprehension lest the slightest appearance of trepidation might betray his evil conscience, he put the cup to his mouth without delay and gulped down a large mouthful of the mixture. That done, the sick youth also took with confidence the cup that was offered him and drank the remainder.

The doctor was now in an extraordinary hurry to make the best of his way to his own house, where, in consequence of the manner in which he had done his medical business, and in order to furnish himself with an antidote to the poison, his immediate presence was indispensable. But the cruel woman, determining to complete the object she had undertaken, stuck close to him all the way with sacrilegious obstinacy, neither would she allow him to be the breadth of a nail away from her until, as she said, the mixture were thoroughly

digested and its noxious or innocuous effects determined. Eventually when, after repeated prayers and entreaties, the doctor prevailed on her to leave him, the insidious pestilence had already passed through his stomach and affected his entire system with such force, that he was seized with a heavy fit of somnolency. Hardly able to proceed to his home, he arrived there with great difficulty, and had scarcely time to relate to his wife what had happened and request of her to obtain, as the reward for putting two men to death, at least the sum of money that had been promised him for poisoning one, than the life in his body became extinct, and thus this celebrated doctor perished by a violent death.

Neither did the young man, husband of the wicked woman, live much longer, but afflicted with the same symptoms as the doctor, and bewailed by the mendacious tears of his treacherous wife, he also died.

When the funeral rites and ceremonies in honour of the deceased had been complied with, the widow of the doctor, after the interval of a few days, called upon the widow of the murdered youth, and demanded the promised reward for the double homicide. Upon which the murderess, like to herself at all times, pretending the appearance, although she was entirely void of honesty, replied in terms soft, smooth, and prolix, promising anything and everything, nay, even appointing a certain day at an early period to pay the sum agreed upon—stipulating, however, in order to complete the business she had already begun, to be pro-

vided with more of the poison. Into this snare, another of the many laid by this treacherous woman, the doctor's widow fell; and, desirous of ingratiating herself with her wealthy acquaintance, consenting without hesitation to do what the other required, she hastened back to her home, and straightway brought the box of poison, with all that it contained. The widow of the unfortunate young man, eager to execute the criminal designs she yet meditated, stretched forth her blood-stained hands to secure the powerful auxiliary. Unable to tolerate the claims of the infant daughter of her murdered husband, the legal heiress of his property, her greedy, grasping spirit impelled her to deprive her own child of life, in order to possess her patrimony. Certain, in case of the untimely death of the child, of the reversion of the inheritance, and proving herself as nefarious a parent as she had been a wife, she contrived a plan to suit her purpose; and inviting the doctor's widow to dinner, administered the poison to the widow and to her own little daughter on the same day.

The noxious beverage instantly destroyed the vitals of the child, and stopped its gentle breath; but the other, so soon as a tempestuous heaving of the lungs announced the meanderings of the detestable fluid within her, and an increasing difficulty of breathing added certainty to her suspicion, perceiving the truth at once, hurried without more ado to the house of the Prefect, as fast as she was able to go. Uttering the most piercing cries and lamentations, and earnestly

entreating admittance, her bewailings were so loud and clamorous, that a great assemblage of people was speedily collected on the spot; for which reason, as well as on account of the enormity of the crime she had to disclose, the house of the Prefect was immediately thrown open to her, and an audience permitted. There she had no sooner detailed the atrocities of the infamous woman from beginning to end, than she grew more and more giddy, a cloud overspread her senses, she compressed her lips, gasped for breath, ground her teeth, and falling at the feet of the Prefect in strong convulsions presently expired. The Prefect, an experienced magistrate, instantly proceeding to investigate the manifold poisonings of the murderess, suffered not the scent to grow cold. Summoning, therefore, to his presence the chamber-women of the criminal, and extracting from them the truth by torture, he condemned the culprit to a punishment which, although the most suitable he was able to devise, was infinitely less than she deserved. She was ordered to be thrown before wild beasts, to be devoured.

END OF TENTH EPISODE.

Now while I was remaining outside the entrance of the amphitheatre, and preparations were going on

within for exhibiting the awful spectacle to the vast concourse of spectators, a soldier, in compliance with the expressed will of the people for the immediate production of the criminal, having been dispatched to the public prison to demand her forthwith, had already departed, and was proceeding along the middle of the street directly on his way thither. Whereupon, beginning to entertain very serious apprehensions regarding my own safety, and considering, that whatever description of wild beast might be let loose to tear the wicked woman in pieces, there were none so well trained, none so discreet and moderate in their appetite, as to be likely to abstain from devouring me into the bargain, notwithstanding I had committed no crime, and no sentence of death had been passed upon me—meanwhile, having the more leisure to indulge in my reflections, as my master and most of his family were at the time busily engaged in preparing the wild beasts for their onslaught, and the remainder, exclusively absorbed in their own amusement, had little attention to bestow on a mild, steady jackass, like myself,—I had ruminated on the subject for some time, when a thought suddenly struck me, that I determined to put in execution. Accordingly, moving gently away by slow degrees, and proceeding with furtive step to lift one foot gently after the other till I reached the nearest gate of the city, I then suddenly struck off in a gallop, and galloped at my utmost speed six miles on end, till I came to Cenchreæ. This city, which I reached in an extremely short space

of time, said to be the noblest of the Corinthian colonies, is washed by the Ægean Sea, and possesses a safe and much-frequented harbour for ships in the Saronic Gulf. But retiring far from the busy multitude, and selecting a sequestered spot on the sea-shore, I stretched myself at full length on the bosom of the soft sand, where my wearied body was sprinkled and refreshed by the spray of the ocean. For already had the chariot of the Sun completed its daily course, and the tranquil stillness of the evening hour invited repose.

BOOK XI.

A Night Scene on the Sea-shore — Prayer of Lucius to the Goddess Isis — Auspicious Appearance and Answer of the Goddess — Procession of the Goddess — Lucius recovers his proper Shape — Address of the Priest of Isis to Lucius — Ceremony of the dedication of a Ship to the Goddess — Religious ceremony in the Temple — Lucius recovers his White Horse — Initiation of Lucius as a Priest of the Goddess Isis by Mithras her High Priest — Lucius sets sail from Cenchreæ and arrives at Rome — Second and third ceremonies of Initiation to the Mysteries of the Gods Osiris and Serapis —Lucius received into the College of the Pastophori.

About the first watch of the night, suddenly awakening from a sound sweet sleep, I started in a panic, and looking around me, perceived, amid the silent shadowy nocturnal solitudes that I had procured by my flight, the moon's full orb, just emerged from the waves of the sea, shining with a degree of whiteness unusually bright and glittering. Knowing that the all-powerful Goddess of Night, excelling in the attributes of majesty all the other deities, not only extended her providence to human affairs, domestic cattle, and the beasts of the field, but that things inanimate vegetated under her influence, and even bodies in the earth, in the sea, and the firmament, obediently increased with her incre-

ments, and lessened with her wanings, I resolved, now that Fate at last seemed to proffer me a tardy hope of deliverance from my grievous and manifold sufferings, to offer up my supplications to the august image, and address myself in mental prayer to the deity in whose presence I was. Briskly springing on my feet, and shaking off the remains of drowsiness, I commenced by bathing in the sea for the sake of purification, and in obedience to the precepts of the divine Pythagoras, who has propounded the number seven as the most suitable for religious ceremonies, I dipped my head seven times in the waves. That done, while joy and alacrity animated my bosom, despite of my sorry, doleful ass's countenance, I poured forth the feelings of my heart in silence, and addressed the powerful divinity to the following effect :—

"O Queen of Heaven, whether it be thou that art the benign Ceres, first mother of the fruits of the earth, who in joy at the discovery of thy daughter reclaimed mankind from the ancient savage nutriment on the acorn, and giving them a better and sweeter food, now tillest the Eleusinian soil—or whether thou art the celestial Venus that hast associated together the sexes in mutual love from the beginning of all things, and now that thou hast caused the offspring of the human race to be perpetual, art adored in thy seagirt temple at Paphos—or whether thou art that Goddess, sister of Apollo, whose soothing remedies comfort women in travail, and art now worshipped, after bringing innu-

merable multitudes into the world, in thy far famed shrine at Ephesus—or, finally, whether thou art the triple-faced Proserpine, by whose hand the mortal limits of the earth's boundary are determined; at whose terrible countenance the midnight ghosts shrink appalled and cease their howlings; and who, wandering through sacred groves, many and various, art propitiated by a multitude of different rituals—illuminating the walls of many cities simultaneously with thy feminine lustre, nourishing by thy liquid beams the joyful seeds of the earth, and substituting thy quivering light for the bright rays of the sun,—to thee, whatever be thy name,—whatever the fitting forms and ceremonies to address thee, I offer up my prayer. Assist me in the depth of calamity, restore my broken fortunes, impose a truce on my sufferings, and terminate the cruel labours and vicissitudes I have endured. Deprive me of the dire form of a quadruped; gladden the eyes of my relatives with my human countenance; restore me to the figure of Lucius. Albeit, if it be the inexorable cruelty of an offended deity that presses upon me; if I be not permitted to exist in human form—then let me die."

Having now concluded my supplications I became oppressed with grief, and for a considerable while lamenting my unfortunate condition, my fainting heart at last was overpowered with drowsiness, and I sank down to sleep on the same bed on the sand where I had lain before. But lo and behold, I had scarcely

closed my eyes when a celestial vision appeared to me. I saw a divinely beautiful female countenance, such as even the Gods themselves might venerate, emerge from the middle of the ocean, whence rising by degrees above the surface of the water, the body at last became visible, and finally, the entire dripping figure seemed to stand before me. Were it not that the poverty of human language forbids the endeavour, or were the divinity herself to supply a sufficient stock of eloquence, then, reader, I might peradventure be enabled to describe to thee this wonderful apparition, although under present circumstances I can do no more than tell thee in the first place, that over her divine neck her long thick hair hung in graceful ringlets, curling more and more towards the extremities, and that on her head she wore a crown of complicated form. The crown at the top was encircled by a garland of flowers of various sorts, and upon the middle part that rested on her forehead was a flat polished circle like a looking-glass, or rather like the moon itself, which emitting a white light, was bounded on the right and on the left by ears of corn, and by vipers that seemed to be rising out of the furrows of the earth. Her dress was of linen cloth, woven of fine flax, and coloured with various different colours. A portion was yellow, like the crocus flower, some of a flaming rosy red, and a part clear shining white. But what most of all perplexed my sight and enthralled my senses was her cloak of the deepest, splendid lustrous black, that, thrown from below the

right side over the left shoulder, and there confined with a knot like the boss of a shield, and gracefully joined in front by ligatures along the edges, hung pendulous in multiplied folds. In the middle of the garment, whose entire surface, as well as of the border, was covered with groups of glittering stars, appeared a central ornament, the figure of the moon a fortnight old, that breathed a flaming radiance. Finally, attached to this beautiful cloak, as it were by self adherence, clinging to the drapery in whatever direction it was wafted by the breeze, was a garland of flowers and apples. The objects that the Goddess carried were of different description; for in her right hand she bore a brazen timbrel,* encompassed by a narrow rim, bent in the form of the girdle of a man's body, and furnished with three transverse chords, which, as the instrument was shaken by a movement of the arm, emitted a sharp, harsh sound. In her left hand she held a golden vessel† in the shape of a boat, upon whose handles, on the most salient point of each, an asp, its throat swollen to an extraordinary width, reared its head on high. On her ambrosial feet were sandals formed of

* *Crepitaculum.* Substituted in the interpretation of the Paris Delphin edition by the word "Sistrum," whence possibly "strum;" a term, though not recognized by lexicographers, common enough in vernacular English, applied to the playing or rather hammering upon a musical instrument.

† *Cymbium.* In like manner a term bearing joint reference to the form and purpose of a vessel to hold fluid, is preserved to the present day,—"sauce boat," "butter boat," &c.

leaves of the palm tree, emblematic of victory. Such was the appearance of the divinity that, breathing the flowery perfumes of Arabia the Happy, addressed me in the following terms:—

"Behold me, O Lucius. The parent of universal nature attends thy call. The mistress of the elements, initiative germ of generations, supreme of deities, queen of departed spirits, first inhabitant of heaven, and uniform type of all the gods and goddesses, propitiated by thy prayers, is with thee. She who governs with her nod the luminous heights of the firmament, the salubrious breezes of the ocean, the silent, deplorable depths of the shades below, one sole divinity under many forms, worshipped by the different nations of the earth under various titles, and with various religious rites; called by the early Phrygians Pessinuntica, mother of the gods; by the aboriginal inhabitants of Athens, Cecropian Minerva; and by the maritime inhabitants of the island of Cyprus, Paphian Venus; by the arrow-bearing Cretans, Diana Dictynna; by the three-tongued Sicilians, Stygian Proserpine; and by the Eleusinians, the ancient goddess Ceres; she whom other nations respectively call Juno, Bellona, Hecate, Rhamnusia; but whom the Ethiopians, illuminated by the first of the Sun's rays, the Arii and the Egyptians, surpassing all others in ancient learning, distinguish by her true and proper denomination, Queen Isis—is present to thee, favourable and propitious. Dry up thy tears; cease thy lamentations; the

day of thy deliverance shall speedily, through my providence, shine upon thee, provided thou bend thy mind attentively to the instructions I shall give thee.

"The morrow that from the present night will have its birth, is a day that eternal religion hath appointed as a holy festival, at a period when, the tempests of winter having subsided, the waves of the stormy sea abated, and the surface of the ocean become navigable, my priests dedicate to me a new ship, laden with the first-fruits of spring at the opening of the navigation. Await then the coming ceremonial with becoming reverence, and when thou shalt perceive walking in the ranks of the procession the priest, who at my command will bear a crown of roses attached to the sistrum that he carries in his right hand, let not thy mind be overborne by undue solicitude, but follow without hesitation. Fearlessly relying on my protection, press thy way through the masses of the surrounding multitude, until thou hast approached the priest I tell thee of, and when thou art close, advance gently and soberly as if thou wert about to kiss his hand. Then from the sistrum pluck the roses with thy lips, and straightway the sorry form that now thou bearest, a form that long mine eyes have beheld with detestation, shall depart from thee. Think not to encounter difficulty in doing as I command thee. Even at the instant while I am with thee here, I am also present in another place, admonishing my priest in a dream, predicting the events about to happen, and the acts he must perform.

Moreover, at my command, the dense population shall give way before thee. Neither, of those assembled at the festive scene to view the joyful ceremonial shall a single individual view with abhorrence the deformity of thy present figure, or put a malignant, criminal interpretation on the phenomenon, when thou shalt suddenly be restored to thy proper shape. But, remember, clearly understand, and always preserve one thing buried in the depths of thy heart. Throughout the entire course of the remainder of thy life, until thy very last breath hath vanished from thy lips, thou art devoted to my service. To the service of her who has restored thee to mankind and human life, that life will surely without regret be dedicated. Nevertheless, under my protection will thy life be happy and glorious; and when, thy days being spent, thou shalt descend to the shades below, and inhabit the Elysian fields, there also, even in the subterranean hemisphere, shalt thou pay frequent worship to thy propitious patron, whom now thou seest. For there will she be, shining resplendent amid the darkness of Acheron, and extending her dominion to the utmost limit of the Stygian regions. Yet farther. If, through sedulous obedience, religious devotion to thy ministry, and inviolable chastity, thou shalt prove thyself a worthy object of divine favour, then shalt thou feel the influence of the power that I alone possess. The number of thy days shall be prolonged beyond the ordinary decrees of fate."

So soon as the venerable oracle had concluded, the invincible divinity dissolved into itself, and I awoke. Sprinkled with the spray of the sea, and in a state of profuse perspiration, I instantly sprang upon my feet broad awake; astonished exceedingly at the evident, unquestionable apparition I had seen of the powerful goddess. Influenced at once by fear and joy, and intent upon the important commands I had received, I began to recollect and arrange in proper order the several things I had been told to do; and continued to be thus occupied for a considerable time, until the Sun having dissipated the curtain of Night, his golden orb appeared upon the horizon.

At this moment, the religious procession, as predicted, had already commenced, and crowds of people in triumphal guise blocked up the streets of Cenchreæ. All the surrounding objects seemed to participate in their hilarity, and it appeared to me, in the joy of heart with which I viewed the spectacle, that the aspect of the cattle, every individual house, and even of the morning itself, was unusually serene. Presently the frost of night had melted, the air became suddenly warm and still, and the little birds, rejoicing in spring's genial temperature, sang loudly in delightful concert, and soothed with their sweet warblings the mother of the stars, the parent of the seasons, and the mistress of the universe. Nay, even the trees themselves,—trees that, contented in their barrenness, had nought to afford but the shade of their boughs, as well as those destined to

produce heavy autumnal crops of apples,—bent to the southern breeze their branches, glittering with bursting leaves, and agitated with a gentle motion, whistled to one another. The waves broke gently on the shore in regular succession; and now that the loud crash of the tempest was heard no more, and the turbid heavings of the ocean had subsided, the misty clouds disappeared, and the naked firmament was shining with clear splendour in its proper light, when the procession approached the spot where I stood.

Then commenced the prelude to the great ceremonial, beautifully enriched by the votive offerings of zealous individuals, and performed by many and various personages, in characteristic habiliments. First came a man who personated a soldier, girded with a belt about his waist, followed by another, whose scimitar, implements of the chase, and tucked up cloak, proclaimed to be a hunter. Afterwards appeared a man disguised in the garb of a woman, imitating the step and flowing gestures of a female, with gilded sandals on his feet, a wig of false hair on his head, and clad in a silken robe and costly apparel. Then came a fourth, conspicuous for his sword, his helmet, his shield, and his boots, whom, reader, thou wouldst instantly have said belonged to the school of gladiators. Neither was there wanting one who, clad in a purple robe, and attended by the fasces, played the part of a magistrate. And another who, remarkable for the peculiar fashion of his cloak, wooden-soled sandals, staff, and a beard like a

he-goat, pretended to be a philosopher. There were also to be seen two other performers, one of whom, carrying in his hand a long reed, personated an angler with a hook and line, and the other bearing a reed also of a different description, besmeared with bird-lime, represented a fowler. Moreover I saw, first, a tame she-bear, dressed in the dress of a woman, and seated in a chair carried on men's shoulders. Next, an ape, with a plaited straw hat on its head, and a saffron-coloured Phrygian cloak on its shoulders, carrying a golden cup in its hand, in the character of Ganymede. And, finally, I saw an ass, with a pair of wings glued on his back, to imitate the winged horse Pegasus; and a tottering, decrepit old man walking by his side, representing Bellerophon in a manner that, together with the gait of the ass, reader, would have caused thee to smile.

And now, among a variety of other similarly ludicrous representations, that occasioned infinite delight to the populace, the tutelar Goddess, attended by her especial votaries, was exhibited with extraordinary pomp. The image of the divinity was preceded by women, dressed in brilliantly white robes, with garlands of leaves and flowers on their heads; and as they walked along, they plucked flowers from their bosoms, and strewed them on the path of the sacred group behind. Moreover, upon their backs lustrous mirrors were suspended, that with reverent fidelity reflected the figure of the deity. Close at each side of the

image other female attendants, with ivory combs in their hands, made believe, by the motion of their arms and the twisting of their fingers, to comb and ornament the Goddess's royal hair; while some, from vessels they held in their hands, sprinkled perfumes and balsams, drop by drop, upon the streets. The image of the Goddess, offspring of the celestial stars, was farther propitiated by a great number of persons of both sexes in her rear, bearing lamps, torches, wax-candles, and other sorts of artificial lights, while a goodly choir of youths, clad in long, close-fitting robes of brilliant white, sang a beautiful hymn, composed under favour of the Muses by a talented poet expressly for the occasion, and accompanied by the sweet, lovely melody of the pipes.

After these advanced, preceded by people proclaiming the approach of the sacred things, pipers, followed by the principal votive offerings dedicated to the great god Serapis, while upon reeds, inclining in an oblique direction towards the right ear, they played an introductory melody, the same as they were used to perform in the temple of that deity. Afterwards came crowding forward, clad in linen robes of clear shining white, a great number of men and women of all classes, and of all ages, who had been initiated in the divine mysteries. The hair of the women was moistened by perfume, and enveloped in a transparent covering; but the men, terrestrial stars as it were of the great religion, were thoroughly shaven, and their bald heads shone exceed-

ingly. Playing incessantly on sistra of brass, of silver, and even of gold, the sound produced by their instruments was sharp and tinkling. After these followed certain priests of extraordinary stature, bearing the sacred utensils. Clad in white linen robes, drawn tight across the breast, and close fitting down to the very feet, they extended to the view of the public the symbolical insignia of the most powerful of all the divinities. The first, with outstretched arms, carried in his hands a lamp, not such as those commonly used to illuminate evening banquets, but a lamp of gold in the form of a boat, that from an orifice in the middle emitted a flame of extraordinary brightness, and larger size than ordinary. The second, clad like the first, carried in each of his hands a small altar, such as, with symbolical reference to the auxiliary providence of the supreme Goddess, were called "*auxilia.*" The third carried a golden palm tree, of which the leaves were most beautifully wrought, held in a perpendicular position; and also he bore a caduceus, like the caduceus of Mercury. The fourth, as he walked along, displayed to the spectators the figure of a left hand, with the palm open and expanded, representing thereby a symbol of equity and fair dealing, of which the left hand, as slower than the right hand, and more void of skill and craft, is therefore an appropriate emblem. At the same time as he proceeded he poured on the ground a libation of milk from a golden vessel made in the likeness of a woman's breast. The fifth bore a golden

corn-fan,* made with thick-set branches; and the sixth carried an amphora.

Immediately after all these came the images of the Gods, which condescending to avail themselves of the use of human feet, were borne on men's shoulders. One, a terrible figure, reared aloft the head and neck of a dog. Another represented the messenger of the celestial and infernal deities, with a face half black, half golden, bearing the caduceus in his left hand, and shaking a green palm branch in his right hand. Close following the footsteps of Mercury came one of the blessed ministry, who advanced with much gesticulation, bearing on his shoulders the symbol of the prolific Goddess, mother of all things,—a cow, supported in an erect attitude. Last of all appeared, preceded by a priest, bearing a capacious chest closely fastened, and filled with the secret utensils of the magnificent religion, one who carried in his bosom an object that rejoiced the heart of the bearer, a venerable effigy of the supreme deity, neither bearing resemblance to man, cattle, bird, beast, nor any living creature. An exquisite invention, venerable from the novel originality of the fashioning, a wonderful, ineffable symbol of religious mysteries, to be looked upon in profound

* The "*mystica vannus Iacchi*," evidently the origin of the fans of white peacock feathers (*flabelli*), with which at the present day the Pope is shaded by his attendants, in the grand ceremonial of the benediction of the people, &c. We see also, in the procession of Isis, the prototype of the Roman carnival.

silence. Such as it was, its figure was that of a small urn of burnished gold, hollowed very artistically, rounded at the bottom, and covered all over the outside with the wonderful hieroglyphics of the Egyptians. The spout was not elevated, but extended laterally, projecting like a long rivulet, while on the opposite side was the handle, which with similar lateral extension bore on its summit an asp curling its body into folds, and stretching upwards its wrinkled, scaly, swollen throat.

But now at last the promised favour of the omnipotent Goddess Isis had arrived at its term of completion. I saw my destiny approaching. Lo and behold, precisely as prefigured by the divine oracle, advancing at the close of the procession, a priest bearing, attached to the sistrum he carried in his right hand, the token of my deliverance—a crown of roses! A crown? By Hercules, to me a crown of victory. For now through the Providence of the great Goddess was I about to overcome that same Fortune who had wrestled with me so long and cruelly, and afflicted me with all the troubles and perils I had undergone. Agitated to an extraordinary degree by a sudden burst of joy, I nevertheless restrained my inclination, and refraining from rushing forward boisterously, lest my quadrupedal impetuosity might disturb the order of the religious procession, I gently sidled along, and by an oblique movement, with a placid, hesitating, as it were, human gait, crept gradually nearer and nearer. The people,

meanwhile, under the influence of divine inspiration, retreated and made way before me, and the priest, who I could plainly perceive had received the admonition of the nocturnal oracle, stopped all of a sudden of his own accord, and wonderstruck at the coincidence of present circumstances with his vision, held the crown of roses in his right hand close to my very nose. My limbs trembled and my heart throbbed with rapid pulsation. I seized eagerly with my lips roses the most beautiful and brilliant, and greedily, most greedily devoured them. Nor did the celestial promise deceive me. Instantly deformity slid away, as it were, from me, and I lost the form of a brute. First of all my rough hair peeled off in a continuous stream, then my thick skin became soft; and afterwards, in rapid succession, the size of my belly diminished, my hoofs disappeared, and the soles of my feet, whence toes and fingers sprouted, pressed the ground; while my hands, now no longer feet, returning to their elevated position, resumed their pristine duties. My neck no more retained its extreme length, my head grew round, my face assumed human form, my enormously long ears shrunk to their original dimensions, my great stony teeth were as the teeth of a man, and the thing of all others, that with regard to personal appearance worried and displeased me the most—my tail—was nowhere to be seen.

The metamorphose was accomplished with such extraordinary facility, that the senses of the priests and

ministers of religion, as well as of all the people that composed the vast multitude, were wrapt in profound astonishment at the sight of a testimony so magnificent of the power of the great divinity, a spectacle rather resembling the nocturnal images of a dream than a real event. Lifting their hands in silent awe and veneration to heaven simultaneously, they all together poured forth their expressions of gratitude to the goddess for the signal mark of her favour. For my own part, riveted to the spot in mute stupor, and joy so excessive and overpowering that my heart was unable to contain it, I stood stock-still in a state of indetermination what I ought to do, or what I ought to say. While my mind was wavering as to how I should give first utterance to my voice—in what auspicious language I should begin—how most happily exercise my tongue new-born—or how find words sufficient to express my thanksgiving to the great goddess, the priest, seeing I was distressed at my present appearance before the multitude—for since I became divested of the ass's hide I had nothing to cover me—immediately, before uttering a syllable, knowing by divine inspiration all my troubles, and deeply affected by the miracle, nodded his head, as a sign to one of his attendants to provide me with a linen garment. Accordingly, one of the religious persons belonging to the procession forthwith whipped off his upper tunic and threw it over me.

And now the priest, whose benign countenance, by

Hercules, sufficiently betrayed the surprise he felt at my perfectly human appearance, addressed me in the following words: "Oh Lucius," said he, "tempest-driven by the storms of Fortune, at last hast thou arrived in the haven of peace, and at the altar of pity, after the vicissitudes of thy long, toilsome career. Neither hast thou hitherto been shielded by thy birth, thy social position, nor by the learning in which thou art known to excel. During the boisterous season of youth thou hast given way to servile pleasures, and thy ill-fated curiosity hath reaped its just reward. Fortune, nevertheless, through her blindness, even while tormenting thee with the most grievous perils, hath conducted thee, as it were with improvident malignity, to a life of religious beatitude. *Let her now go her ways; let her rage with her utmost fury; and let her seek another victim for her cruelty.** Calamity hath no hold on those whom our goddess hath chosen

* This passage—"Eat nunc, et summo furore sæviat, et crudelitati suæ materiam quærat aliam"—is alone sufficient to show that Lesage, when he composed Gil Blas, had in view the Metamorphoses of Apuleius. In addition to the coincidence of the cave of robbers, the robbers' narratives, Dame Leonarda, the captive damsel, and her escape with the hero of the tale, being persons and events introduced into both compositions, the above apostrophe to Fortune is rendered almost literally in Latin verse by Lesage. The lines inscribed by Gil Blas, about to devote himself to a life of rural retirement, over the door of his house, are:—

"Inveni portum, spes et fortuna valete,
Sat me lusistis; ludite nunc alios."

for her service, and whom her majesty hath vindicated. Oh wicked Fortune! who hath exposed thee to robbers, wild beasts, servitude, crooked winding paths, and grievous journeys; who hath placed the fear of death continually before thine eyes, what hath it profited her? For now thou art received under the guardianship, not of Fortune blind, but of that clear, far-seeing Fortune who illuminates all the other divinities by her nocturnal light. Then let joy, pure and bright as the white garment that now lies upon thee, exhilarate thy countenance. Follow the pomp of the goddess, thy deliverer, with triumphant step, and while thou art absolved from all thy former miseries, let the irreligious acknowledge their errors on beholding thee, and exclaim, 'Lucius hath joyfully vanquished his evil destiny, through the providence of the great Isis!' Above all things, in order that thou mayst be the more secure and better protected, enrol thy name in this our holy army. Ere long thou wilt be bound by an oath in all due solemnity. In the mean time devotedly dedicate thyself to our religion; voluntarily bend thy neck to the yoke of its ministry; and then when thou hast begun to serve the goddess wilt thou more truly rejoice in the fruit of thy liberty."

Here the worthy priest, his chest heaving violently under divine inspiration, and panting for breath, concluded his address; upon which, immediately stepping forward, I mixed amid the throng of religious functionaries, and accompanied the procession. All the

way we went I was a marked and conspicuous personage to the citizens, while the people, nodding their heads and pointing at me with their fingers, exclaimed, "That is he, lookye, he whom the august, omnipotent divinity of the goddess hath just restored to the form of a man." "Aye," said another, "blessed and thrice happy, by Hercules, is he to have merited, by the innocence and faith of his past life, such special patronage of Heaven; thus after a manner to be born again, and be at once betrothed to the service of the holy ministry." In this manner the people continued to make observations concerning me, and greet me incessantly with their noisy congratulations, till at last we arrived at the very spot on the sea-shore where on the preceding night I had lain down on the sand.

The ship of which I had been already forewarned in my vision was there already, and the chief-priest without more ado proceeded immediately to consecrate and dedicate it to the goddess Isis. Accordingly, the chaste, holy man, first having caused the images of the gods to be arranged in proper order, commenced by the most solemn prayers the ceremony of purification, which was most carefully performed with an egg, sulphur, and a lighted torch, according to the proper rites. This auspicious ship was of beautiful form and variegated appearance, covered all over the outside with the wonderful hieroglyphics of the Egyptians. The mast, a tall pine-tree, round and polished, was already raised, and remarkable for the elegance of

the yard at its summit, while upon her splendidly white sail was written in large characters an inscription expressive of good wishes for the prosperity of the convoy. The keel was entirely of pure citron-wood, very highly polished, and the gilded stern was formed after the fashion of a goose's neck. So soon as the purification was concluded, the priests and others belonging to the procession, as well as the laity and all the people, brought corn-fans laden with aromatics, and vied with one another in giving these, as well as other sacrificial offerings, until the lading of the vessel was completed by their bountiful contributions. And now all things being ready, and the auspicious devotional ceremony concluded, a libation of certain ingredients mixed with milk was poured upon the waves, and the ship was slipped from her moorings. As a gentle, peculiarly favourable breeze was blowing when she put to sea, while we remained on the spot so long as she appeared in view, she soon became as a speck on the ocean, through the intervening distance, till we could no longer distinguish her. Then the bearers of the sacred things took up each what he had brought, and we all joyfully returned to the place whence they had come —the temple.

So soon as we arrived, the chief-priest, the bearers of the divine images, and all those persons who had been initiated into the venerable secret mysteries, were admitted into the sanctuary* of the goddess, where

* Cubiculum, or Θαλαμος.

they deposited the inspired effigies according to the accustomed forms. Then when the latter formality was over, one of the initiated, commonly called the scribe, who stood outside the door of the temple, mounted into a high pulpit, and in a tone as if he were proclaiming a meeting, having called together the priests composing the sacred college of the Pastophori, he read the following votive address from the book in which it was written: "To the great Prince, to the Senate, to the Equestrian order, and to the Roman people, in sailing ships, all things in all parts of the world subject to our dominion." He then dismissed the people by pronouncing, according to the Greek custom and in the Greek language, the words "Λαοις αφεσις." Which latter announcement was received with a general shout that testified the approbation of the people, who, overwhelmed with joy at the auspicious conclusion of the ceremonial, and having kissed the feet of a silver image of the goddess on the steps of the temple, returned to their homes, bearing olive branches, sweet herbs, and garlands. For my part, I stood riveted to the spot, with my eyes intently fixed on the image of the goddess; and being compelled by the feelings of my heart to remain there, I revolved in my mind all my past adventures.

Meanwhile Fame ceased not for a moment to ply her unflagging wings, and speedily scattered abroad everywhere in the immediate vicinity of my home the intelligence of the memorable event that, through the

adorable providence of the Goddess, had befallen me. Accordingly my nearest relatives, my servants, and several of my acquaintance, whom, after the false accounts of my death, the sudden news delighted exceedingly, recovering themselves from their grief without delay, departed from their homes, and hastened to Cenchreæ. Anxious to behold the divine spectacle as it were of one risen from the dead, and returned from the shades below, they brought me presents of many and various kinds, which generous oblations, refreshed by the unexpected pleasure of seeing their faces once again, I received with much thankfulness; the more so as they had been careful to provide me with clothes and money, which I had most need of. I had an interview with every one of them, and conversed with each on the subject of their respective departments; which done, after giving them an account of the troubles I had suffered, and represented to them my happiness at the prospect now before me, I bade them adieu forthwith, in order to renew the sight of the object which, in the present state of my mind, gratified me more than everything. Returning accordingly to the image of the goddess, I procured an apartment within the enclosure of the temple, and there took up my temporary habitation.

From that day forward I became an inseparable companion of the priests, assisted at all their private ceremonials, and was a constant regular worshipper of the great Goddess. Neither did I pass a single night

afterwards, nor even a moment's sleep, without receiving a warning from the divinity in a vision, bidding me prepare myself to be initiated in those sacred rites to which I had been long since destined. Notwithstanding, I know not how it happened, but having previously made diligent inquiries, and reflecting on the difficulty of a full compliance with my religious duties, in consequence of the casualties, despite the most rigid circumspection, incident to a life of chastity and abstinence, I delayed from reverential dread to follow the natural bent of my inclination, from day to day. At last one night, lo and behold I had a dream. I thought the chief priest made his appearance with the bosom of his robe stuffed full of various things that he offered me. Upon which I thought that I asked him what all the things were? and that he replied that they had been sent to me from Thessaly, whence a servant of mine named *Candidus* already, he said, had arrived. When I awoke I considered for a good while the circumstances of the vision I had seen, and thought to myself over and over again what it could possibly mean, especially since I was quite sure I had no servant of the above name. At the same time the offering of the presents appeared to me a favourable presage, and likely to portend good one way or other, take it how I would. Thus remaining in a state of astonishment and anxious anticipation of a fortunate issue, I waited till the doors of the temple were opened at the usual time in the morning. At last the hour arrived,

and the white curtains having been drawn back in opposite directions, we prayed in the venerable presence of the Goddess, while the priest, having put everything in order, walked round and round the altar, procured the consecrated materials, and making solemn supplications, poured from a chalice upon the altar water drawn from a fountain within the sanctuary. Presently, the sacred rites having been properly performed, the voices of the priests burst forth in salutation of the dawn, and announced the first hour of the day.

At this identical moment some of my servants who had remained in my own country since the time that through my unfortunate acquaintance with Fotis I had got my neck into a halter, now made their appearance, conducted hither by certain of my friends, and bringing with them the white horse I had ridden in the beginning of my journey. The beast had been dragged about from place to place, and after being sold to many different persons, was recovered in consequence of being recognized from a mark on his back. Perceiving then the prescient wisdom of the admonition I had received, and its coincidence not only with the promises of gain I had anticipated, but with the recovery of the white horse under the allegory of my servant *Candidus*, I became lost in admiration. Moreover, considering the benefits I was now receiving in the light of a pledge for others I had reason to expect, my mind became continually intent on the same object, and frequently and diligently attending the

offices of devotion, I felt a desire increasing more and more every day to be received into the holy ministration. Accordingly I entreated the chief priest earnestly and repeatedly to initiate me into the mysteries of the Holy Night, while he, remarkable for the gravity of his disposition, and for the exercise of religious abstinence, kindly and courteously, after the manner that parents are wont to reply to the inconsiderate requests of children, checked my importunity, exhorted me to await with patience the proper opportunity, and soothed my anxious mind by representing the advantage of delay. "The day of initiation," he said, "as well as the name of the priest appointed to perform the sacred rite, and the amount of expense necessary to be incurred on the occasion, were things all invariably indicated by a sign and admonition from the Goddess herself. An event which," he added, "ought to be awaited with visible signs of humility, and under such a demeanour, that, avoiding the extremes of precipitancy on one hand and contumacy on the other, I might be, when called upon, neither too ready nor too dilatory. Nor was there," he said, "a single one among the initiated of a mind so depraved or so bent on his own destruction as, without receiving a special command from his mistress, to dare to undertake the ministry of the Goddess rashly and sacrilegiously, and thereby commit an act certain to bring upon himself a deadly injury. For," continued he, "the gates of the shades below and the care of our life being in the hands

of the Goddess, the ceremony of initiation into her mysteries is, as it were, to suffer death, with the precarious chance of resuscitation. Wherefore the Goddess, in the wisdom of her divinity, hath been accustomed to select as persons to whom the secrets of her religion can with propriety be entrusted, those who, standing as it were on the utmost limit of the course of life they have completed, may through her providence be in a manner born again, and commence the career of a new existence. Wherefore," he added, "since, through the favour of the great deity, I was clearly and indisputably destined to become a happy member of her ministry, and had long since received a premonition, it behoved me in the mean time, in common with all other worshippers of the most pure religion, to abstain from all manner of profane and forbidden food in order that I might be better prepared for the knowledge of her secret mysteries."

Here the priest concluded his instructions, and, from that time forward, determining no longer to allow impatience to corrupt my strict duty of obedience, my mind became intent upon pursuing a quiet, mild manner of behaviour, and I every day performed the sacred rites of worship in exemplary silence. Neither did the powerful goddess disappoint my hopes, or even torment me with a long-protracted period of delay. But, ere long, on one dark night, extending her salutary benevolence towards me, she admonished me, in terms thoroughly divested of obscurity, that the long-

expected day, when I should obtain the utmost extent of my wishes, was now about to arrive; intimating, at the same time, the sum of money necessary to be procured by me to defray the expenses of the ceremonial, and nominating her own high-priest Mithras—to whom she said I was united by a certain divine conjunction of the stars—to perform the necessary sacred rites on the occasion. With a mind refreshed by these benevolent precepts of the supreme goddess, and others of a like nature in addition, I roused myself from sleep before it was perfectly light, and hastened without more ado to the apartments inhabited by the priest, whom, on my arrival, I met just coming out of his bed-chamber. I had no sooner saluted him, with the intention to renew my solicitations more earnestly than ever, and claim to be initiated in the ministry as a right now due to me, when he, speaking first, said, the moment he saw me, "Oh, my Lucius, thou art truly happy and blessed thus to be voluntarily and propitiously dignified by the august deity. Nay, why dost thou stand motionless? Wherefore delay an instant? The day which by thy earnest supplications thou hast prayed for hath now arrived, when by these hands thou shalt be initiated into the most holy mysteries of the many-titled goddess." The old man having thus spoken, courteously took me by the hand, and so conducted me all the way to the door of the very spacious temple, which was opened accordingly with all due forms and solemnities. Then, after he had celebrated the morning's sacrifice, he drew

forth from the most secret and sacred place in the temple certain books that were deposited there, written in strange characters calculated to preserve them from the perusal of the inquisitive and profane, partly figures of various sorts of animals that expressed words compendiously, and suggested ideas to the mind; and some of other forms, either twisted like a knot, or round like a wheel, or tortuously involved with one another like the tendrils of a vine at their extremities.

From these books the priest then informed me the things it would be necessary to provide for my initiation, all which articles I used the utmost diligence to procure, and purchased partly at my own expense and partly through the assistance of my friends, even more liberally than was required of me. At last, at the appointed hour, which was notified to me by the priest, he led me to the nearest baths, accompanied by a great concourse of people, where, after I had bathed in the usual manner, he first solicited forgiveness of the gods, and then sprinkled me all over with the clearest and purest water; which done, two-thirds of the day having then already elapsed, he conducted me back to the temple, and placed me at the feet of the image of the goddess. There, after giving me some instruction that mortal tongue is not permitted to reveal, he then, addressing himself to me, in the hearing of all the bystanders, bade me for the succeeding ten days restrain my appetite, eat no animal food, and drink no wine.

Having passed the whole prescribed period accord-

ingly in reverential abstinence, when the ten days were completed, and the time for pledging myself to the divine service had arrived, the sun had no sooner descended from his meridian course and ushered in the shadows of evening, than lo and behold, according to ancient custom, the people came flocking towards me from all directions to honour me with all sorts of presents. Presently all the profane having been removed to a distance, the priest threw over my shoulders a new linen robe, and forthwith led me by the hand into the farthest recesses of the sanctuary.

And here, studious reader, peradventure thou wilt be sufficiently anxious to know all that was said and done, which, were it lawful to divulge, I would tell thee, and, wert thou permitted to hear, thou shouldst know. Nevertheless, although the disclosure would affix the penalty of rash curiosity to my tongue as well as thy ears, yet will I, for fear thou shouldst be too long tormented with religious longing and suffer the pain of protracted suspense, tell thee the truth notwithstanding. Listen, then, to what I shall relate. I approached the abode of death; with my foot I pressed the threshold of Proserpine's palace. I was transported through the elements, and conducted back again. At midnight I saw the bright light of the sun shining. I stood in the presence of the Gods, the gods of heaven and of the shades below; aye, stood near and worshipped. And now have I only told thee such things that, hearing, thou necessarily canst not

understand; and being beyond the comprehension of the profane, I can enunciate without committing a crime.

After the night had passed, and, morning having dawned, the usual solemnities were at an end, I was consecrated by twelve stoles being put upon me, and then led forth in habiliments of sufficiently religious description, which I am not prohibited by any obligation from describing, since at the time in question they were seen by all the people. My apparel was of linen, coloured of various colours, and a valuable chlamys reaching to my ankles was thrown over my shoulders; a chlamys, called by the priests the Olympic stole, that on whichever side it was viewed, was variegated with figures of divers animals, including Indian serpents and hyperborean griffins, which latter creatures, bearing the wings of a bird, belong to another hemisphere. Thus arrayed and adorned in habiliments brilliant as the sun at noon-day, and my head gracefully encircled by a chaplet of shining palm-leaves that projected all round like rays, I was made to ascend a wooden pulpit, placed in the very middle of the temple, in front of the image of the goddess, and there a lighted torch having been put in my hand, and myself placed in a proper attitude, standing still as a statue, the curtains before me were all of a sudden removed, and I was exhibited to the multitude. The remainder of the day, the first of my initiation, celebrated as my natal day, I passed in festivities, and enjoyed the

delights of social conversation at a delicious banquet. On the third day afterwards the same religious ceremonies were repeated, including a religious breakfast, followed by a final consummation of ceremonial.

After I had remained at Cenchreæ a few days longer, during the whole of which period the sight of the divine image afforded me pleasure unspeakable that bound me in an irremunerable debt of gratitude, I received an admonition from the goddess to return to my home; to comply with which, having reverently returned my thanks, insufficiently, though to the best of my ability, I tardily commenced preparations. After some time had elapsed, scarcely able to rend asunder the ties of the most ardent affection that riveted me to the spot, at last I cast myself on the ground before the image of the goddess, and watering its feet with the tears that copiously burst forth, I addressed her in the following words, that, interrupted with incessant sobs, were almost inarticulate:—"Oh holy and perpetual preserver of the human race, ever ready to cherish mortals by thy munificence, and afford thy sweet maternal affection to the wretched under misfortune; whose bounty is never at rest, neither by day nor by night, nor throughout the very minutest particle of duration; thou who stretchest forth thy health bearing right hand over the land and over the sea for the protection of mankind, to disperse the storms of life, to unravel the inextricable entanglement of the web of fate, to mitigate the tempests of fortune,

and restrain the malignant influences of the stars,—the gods in heaven adore thee, the gods in the shades below do thee homage, the stars obey thee, the divinities rejoice in thee, the elements and the revolving seasons serve thee. At thy nod the winds breathe, clouds gather, seeds grow, buds germinate; in obedience to thee, the earth revolves and the sun gives his light; 'tis thou who governs the universe and treads Tartarus under thy foot; the majesty of thy presence terrifies the birds that hover through the air, the wild beasts that wander over the mountains, the serpents that hide in the earth, and the monsters that swim in the sea. The barrenness of my heart renders me incapable to utter thy praises, and my slender patrimony to offer thee becoming sacrifices; neither have I eloquence of speech to proclaim what I think and feel of thy majesty. But had I a thousand mouths, a thousand tongues, and a never ending flow of language, 'twere alike insufficient; wherefore will I, poor as I am, do all I am able, according to the utmost suggestions of a religious heart,—figure to myself, and preserve perpetually, locked up in the deepest recesses of my bosom, the image of thy divine countenance, and thy most holy divinity."

When I had thus offered up my prayer to the supreme goddess, I embraced the priest Mithras, hanging on his neck, and kissing him repeatedly, as if he were my father. After thanking him for all the great benefits he had conferred on me, asking his for-

giveness for my inability to requite him sufficiently, and in a prolonged conversation repeating over and over again my expressions of gratitude, I finally bade him adieu. I had now determined to revisit my paternal abode after a long protracted absence, and in the course of a few days, accordingly, hastily collecting together my packages, I got on board ship and set sail towards Rome. Certain of a favourable wind, the voyage was consequently rapid, and having speedily made the port of Ostia, I proceeded in a carriage to Rome, and arrived at the holy city on the evening of the day previous to the ides * of December.

Thenceforward it was my principal study and practice to offer up my supplications every day to the supreme divinity of Queen Isis, in a temple in the Campus Martius, called "Campensis," which is frequented with the deepest veneration. There, a stranger to the temple, though indigenous with the religion, I became a constant worshipper.

While in this manner I passed in succession all my days alike, the glorious sun traversing the sign bearing circle of the Zodiac had completed the period of a year, when another example of the vigilant care of the truly beneficent divinity was manifested to me in my sleep,

* Whether owing to errors and omissions in the various editions, or otherwise, the period between the departure of the consecrated ship in the spring, and the Ides, or the 12th of December, comprising the time while Lucius remained at Cenchreæ and was on his voyage to Rome, seems insufficiently accounted for by Apuleius. But, *sic in orig.*

and I was warned to undergo another initiation, and make preparations for the ceremonial. Naturally astonished and embarrassed at the thought of what was to be done, and what event was about to be developed, since I considered myself fully initiated already, I arrived at last at the solution of the wonderful fact, partly by revolving in my mind my own religious scruples, and partly by applying to the priests for advice and information. I learnt finally that my initiation hitherto related exclusively to the goddess Isis, and that, as yet, I was insufficiently illuminated in the mysteries of the great God, supreme parent of all the other gods, the invincible Osiris. For although there is a strict connexion between the religions of both deities, and even the essence of both divinities is identical, the ceremonies of the respective initiations are considerably different. Wherefore I came to comprehend that it was as a servant of the great god Osiris that I was now called upon and admonished. My mind however was not allowed to remain long in a state of uncertainty. For on the following night I had a dream, and thought that one of the religious functionaries clad in linen garments and bearing in his hands thyrsi, ivy, and several other things I am not permitted to mention, entered my dwelling, and after laying the articles at the feet of my household gods, seated himself in my chair, and recited all the things necessary to be prepared for a copious religious banquet. Then as if for the express purpose of affording me an opportunity

of recognizing him afterwards, he showed me as he walked with a gentle hesitating step, that the ankle of one of his feet was a little twisted. Consequently all manner of darkness and ambiguity was removed from the manifestation of the will of the Gods; for the next morning, after performing the salutations to the Goddess, as I was diligently scrutinizing the appearance of all the religious functionaries in order to compare their likeness with him whom I had seen in my vision, I beheld one of the Pastophori, who, not only with regard to his figure, but his ankle also, resembled the nocturnal image with extraordinary precision. Accordingly, without delay, addressing myself to this person, whose name I afterwards learnt was Asinius Marcellus, a name (Asinius) bearing some degree of relation to my late metamorphose into the form of an ass,—I found that he, as well as myself, had been warned in a dream, and had received the necessary instructions relative to the coming ceremonial. For, on the preceding night, he had imagined in a vision, that while he was placing chaplets on the image of the great god Osiris, a voice proceeded from its mouth, whence the decrees of fate are proclaimed to all mankind, announcing to him that there would be sent to him an inhabitant of the city of Madaura, whom he must forthwith initiate in his mysteries; a person who would obtain glory through devotion to his religious exercises, while through the providence of the deity considerable profit would accrue to himself.

These were the circumstances that caused me to be affianced to the holy ministry of Osiris, notwithstanding that the period of the ensuing ceremony was, contrary to my inclination, retarded in consequence of want of money, proceeding from the diminution that my patrimonial resources had suffered during a long journey, and owing to my expenses in Rome greatly exceeding my disbursements in provincial cities. Urged therefore on the one hand by divine commands, and tormented on the other by rigid poverty, I was in a painful dilemma, and as says the ancient proverb, in a state between the stone and the covenant,* while the admonitions of the deity continued none the less incessantly to urge and impel me. So frequently indeed were my nocturnal visions repeated, that stimulated at last to an excessive degree of perturbation of spirit, I took from my back the small garment that I wore, and selling it, was thus enabled to complete the sum of money required. In doing so I complied with the precise terms of the precept announced to me, for, said the divinity, " How canst thou, when a ceremonial so important is necessary to be undertaken, fear to commit thyself to a state of poverty which thou wilt never have reason to repent, or hesitate to dispose of garments which, long ago, hadst thou had occasion to procure

* In allusion to the ancient manner of ratifying a covenant, where the priest killed a pig with a blow of a stone, exclaiming, as he struck the animal, " May Jupiter smite him who breaks this covenant as I smite this pig."

for thine own pleasures, thou wouldst readily have provided?" Having, by the above means, got all that was required, after abstaining from animal food for the space of ten days as before, I was not only admitted to the nocturnal orgies of the supreme god Osiris, but of Serapis also, and by divine permission fulfilled the kindred duties of the religion ever afterwards in full confidence. From which event I derived during my residence in a foreign country a vast source of comfort, and it was, moreover, the means of affording me a better livelihood. For the favourable breath of the propitious deity Good Event wafted me to the Roman Forum, where I pleaded causes in the Latin tongue.

A short period of time only had elapsed when lo and behold, I was once more again disturbed by the miraculous and unexpected mandate of the gods, and compelled to undergo a third initiation. Wherefore my mind was filled with much anxiety, and I remained in a grievous state of suspense while I diligently turned in my mind over and over again, whither this new and unusual expression of the will of the gods was likely to lead me, or what possible supplemental particle of the twice-repeated ceremony of initiation could remain to be performed. Either the priests, thought I to myself, have not expressed themselves sufficiently explicitly, or the counsel they gave me was rash and inconsiderate; in short, by Hercules, I began to have serious doubts of their fidelity. At last, when my senses had been borne by the fluctuating tide of thought to the verge of insanity, the figure of the

benevolent deity appeared to me one night in a dream, and thus addressed me in the spirit of divination: "Let it not terrify thee, nor think that thou hast omitted aught in the repeated series of religious rites that thou hast had to go through. Rather shouldst thou rejoice at the reiterated marks of favour of the divinities, and exult to have obtained thrice, what others seldom even once are permitted to receive. That number, confidently believe, will for ever render thee blessed. Besides, as thou wilt perceive upon reflection, the ensuing ceremonial is absolutely indispensable. For the sacerdotal garments of the goddess, with which thou wast first invested in the province of Achaia, still remain there deposited in the temple at Cenchreæ. Neither canst thou be ennobled by that auspicious apparel, when thou hast occasion to invest thyself here in Rome, during thy supplications, or on solemn festivals. Wherefore, that thou mayst for ever enjoy health, happiness, and prosperity, under tutelage of all three powerful deities, submit thyself with joyful heart to the third initiation."

Thus far did the divine vision, in persuasive accents, prescribe what was necessary to be done. Neither did I supinely suffer the business to remain in a state of postponement and procrastination. On the contrary, immediately relating to the priest everything that had been announced to me, and having refrained from animal food as I had done twice before, nay, farther extended the observance by a voluntary vow of abstinence and chastity for the entire remaining period of

my life, I purchased everything I had been instructed to provide for the ceremonial. Guided rather by the pious impulse of my heart than by rule and measure, I had nevertheless no reason to regret either trouble or expense. For by Hercules, not only through the providence of the gods was I now furnished with a liberal income by means of my forensic emoluments, but very few days afterwards, during the silence of the night, the god Osiris, chief of the great, highest among the greater, greatest among the highest, and ruler of the greatest, condescended, not under a different figure, but in his own venerable person, to announce to me that I should forthwith become glorious and renowned through my pleadings in the forum. At the same time, bidding me no longer fear the jealousies and slanders to which learning acquired by laborious study had hitherto rendered me liable, he nominated me a member of the college of Pastophori; and in order to raise me above the ordinary ranks of my holy profession, also enrolled me among the number of his quinquennial decurions. Thenceforward I fulfilled my duty as a member of a most ancient college, that dates its origin from the days of Sylla, and with a head newly and thoroughly shaven, joyfully exposed my bald pate to the gaze of the multitude whithersoever I went.

FINIS.

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